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A LAST SCRAP BOOK



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TORONTO

A LAST SCRAP BOOK

BY
GEORGE SAINTSBURY

Hic tertium variavit Magister G. S.: et erat ultima ejus
variatio.

REGISTRUM ANNALIUM COLL. MERT. *mut. mut.*

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PREFACE

IF the book—a very interesting one to others besides men of the College it deals with,—from which I have taken a motto for this *Last Scrap Book*, had appeared before the First, I should probably have adopted the same for all three volumes, with only the numeral—*primum* and *secundum* for *tertium*—altered. It is a curious *special* meaning of “Variation” formerly used both at Oxford and Cambridge, but long entirely disused at the latter University, maintained in Oxford only at Merton, and there only till the mid-eighteenth century. Here it is the formal entry which seems appropriate, and it is the widest possible sense of “variation” which describes the little books themselves, according to their author’s plan of them. I think I have seen

Variations, by itself, used as a title for a book of essays, but I rather fancy that this was in the musical sense—for treatments of the same or similar subjects in different manners. Here, throughout the set, I have endeavoured to “variate,” in the most polymorphic fashion possible, as regards subject and treatment both, the farrago of literature, politics, gastronomy, religion, anti-Pussyfootism, moral philosophy, anecdote, reminiscence, and *quodlibetalia* which I had designed.

The result has, in the first two volumes—which were themselves intended to show some variation from each other as wholes—seemed not to displease the majority of readers, and to have secured a fair number of them. An admittedly disgruntled “old student” (who I am glad to see, for the honour of the English class at Edinburgh, discourses with identical words in India and New Zealand) did indeed warn these countries that I am sometimes “heavy-footed.” And a pundit, who modestly writes as “Criticus” for

the *Bombay Sunday Advocate*, even added to that, and declared the *Second Scrap Book* to be “all ‘Tommy-rot’.” “Perhaps it is, my dear, perhaps it is,” to vary once more the admirable reply of the R.C. bishop Grant to the little boy who told him he was “no gentleman” because the bishop carried his own bag across London Bridge.

But however much and however unaffectedly I might be pleased, by the number and quality of my gentle readers on the one hand and by the quality and number of my ungentle ones on the other, I must have been farther advanced in dotage than the ungentlest of these latter suggested, not to see that there must be an end of Scrapping: albeit some, nay many, of the gentles professed themselves quite “game” for six or seven volumes at least. The cabalistic and immemorial virtues of Three need no general comment or reminder. But the *magistri* my forerunners at Merton “variated” *three* times, and each time delivered addresses on *three* subjects. Let us obey the precedent at least as

regards the volumes; and even in multiplying the subjects of this, as of the others, keep the principle if not the number of variations.

Seriously, and I hope not too bumptiously, it has seemed to me that a record of the varied thoughts and experiences of a man of my age and time might be fairly amusing at the moment, and not quite uninstrusive for the future, if sometimes overhauled therein. Those of us who were born close to the middle of the nineteenth century have had a rather curious *pair* of half-lifetimes. In the first we were younger contemporaries of the great—I say quite calmly “great”¹—Victorian generation. In the second we lived through—I say “through” quite cheerfully, for I think it has in some ways nearly come to an end, as I myself more nearly have—the period of reaction and negation which began between 1880 and 1890. The vast changes in almost every obvious aspect

¹ As is excellently observed in the *Anecdota* of Anonymus: “The visibility of the Spanish Fleet resteth in two things: first, that the Fleet should be there; secondly, that there should be some one who can see it.”

of life which we have seen since have been rarely, if ever, paralleled in the same number of years, especially in the point of having been continuous. In experiencing and regarding these changes and chances—if there be any chance—I have never tried to be in the fashion for the sake of being in it, and seldom, I think, to be out of it merely for the sake of being out of it. Logic and History have been the only external guides I have accepted in temporal things, except where pure Taste (*v. inf.* in text) has reigned alone—as for things not temporal one need not speak here.

Anyhow, looking at my title, I feel that it escapes the danger of division which pointed the *Rolliad* epigram on the proposed Coalition¹ between Pitt and Portland. My friends may be

¹ This coalition was to be on “fair and equal” terms. But, said the wicked Whig wits [ah! where are the Whig wits or, indeed, the Whigs now?], this would never do:

“For ‘equal’ should not please His Grace,
And Pitt dislikes the ‘fair,’”

“the pilot that weathered the storm” being accused of not showing the usual weakness of pilots and other seafarers for Black-eyed Susan and her sisters.

glad of another *Scrap Book*, and my enemies that it is the *Last*.¹

That it should be so, another reason has accrued, not only since the book was written, but since it has been, in large part, printed. The title of Scrap XXXIII. (*C'est Fini de Rire*) was perhaps, as first used, a rash provocation to Nemesis: and she has, in the old naval order, "made it so" all too seriously.

GEORGE SAINTSBURY.

I ROYAL CRESCENT, BATH.

October 9, 1924.

¹ In previous volumes I had only to acknowledge two "scraps" apiece as having already been printed. I have none such to acknowledge here.

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A LAST SCRAP BOOK

I. *Twin Cameos I: Two Booksellers.*—Exactly why Carlyle did so greatly desire a *History of Booksellers* has never been quite clear to me, though there could have been no more interesting real figure in it than that half or three-quarters imaginary portrait of himself—the “Sandy Mackaye” of Kingsley’s *Alton Locke*. But if anybody writes such a *History* hereafter, I can furnish him with two sketches of prominent characters in “The Trade”¹ during mid- and late-Victorian times.

The great—for in his way he was great—

¹ Pussyfoots are not as a rule literary, and in pitching on this phrase for Brewers, Vintners, Distillers, and the like, they may not know its earlier possessors. It certainly may be proud of its connection with the two best things vended or vendible.

Quaritch I saw only *twice*—if, indeed, it was not only *once*.

For all my mind is clouded with a doubt.

The doubtful meeting was very early in his career and still earlier in mine. The scene was a second-hand bookshop in the street leading from Leicester Square to the famous Court, itself leading to St. Martin's Lane. Now Quaritch certainly had one thereabouts, and it was there that the famous "remainder" Rubaiyàts reposed in the fourpenny box. Alas! I never saw them. Had I done so and read one single stanza, I dare swear that, young as I was, there would have been no mistake about *me*! But from my fourteenth to my eighteenth year I used to rummage most such shops that I passed on my way between King's College School and Notting Hill. On one occasion I must in some way (I quite forget how, but if, as I think, my friend Sir W. Thiselton-Dyer was with me, he may remember) have "riled" the stallkeeper, who thus apostrophised

me, "You've heard of the ox-eyed Junus?" [I can swear to the remarkable inflexion.] "Well, I'm looking at the pig-faced puppy." Which was exactly what Quaritch would have said, even if it was not he.

Very many (I should say nearly thirty) years afterwards, when I was walking, not to or from school in the goodly company of the future Sir William but, from Fleet Street in the also goodly company of the late Mr. Andrew Lang, he went, and I went with him, into Quaritch's very different shop in Piccadilly. Lang and Quaritch were on very curious terms. Quaritch must have secretly detested Lang, one of whose favourite amusements¹ was to run him up at auctions, and either carry off prizes or make them very expensive conquests. But the bookseller couldn't help according the amateur the respect which expert, privately if not publicly, accords to expert. That,

¹ It would have been rather a dangerous amusement for most people. But danger does not deter the sportsman; and Lang's knowledge of books, on the catalogue-and-collector side, was something to which I myself have never pretended.

however, is not the immediate point. When we went in, an unfortunate and misguided customer was upbraiding the mighty *bouquiniste* with having induced or allowed him to subscribe to some expensive but worthless serial publication. "You must have known," he said plaintively, "that it wasn't any good." "Well," said Quaritch, "'tisn't my business to cry 'stinking fish':" and the pig-faced puppy's mind went back to the ox-eyed Junus.

Nothing of that sort stands, in the books of memory, to the *discredit* of the other bookseller, John Camden Hotten, though some people used to abuse him. I made his acquaintance also as a book-stall-and-shop-rummaging schoolboy; and I must have bought quite a nice six-volume Homer, old calf-bound, with Latin notes and contraction-Greek, from him for two or three shillings before I was fifteen. That, of course, was in the queer little bird-cage hanging over the corner of the Green Park. I did *not* buy the item



in one of his early catalogues (I have even forgotten what it was) which he described as "very curious and disgusting." But years after I mentioned it to Lang, and the phrase took his fancy so much that it found a fresh way into print, and has become almost a *cliché*. And I did get from Hotten my first Catullus (to which I should entirely decline to apply the adjectives just quoted ¹) with the usual adjuncts of Tibullus and Propertius. Indeed I think it was this very copy which innocently caused the blushes on "Johnny" King's face (vide *A Second Scrap Book*).

Hotten, whatever drawbacks he may have had, took a real interest in books; and as the older and better kind of tradesman then usually did, would very gladly talk to you about his wares, whether you bought anything or not. I think one of the last conversations I had with him was when I bought the three copies of *Poems and Ballads*, also mentioned in our last. On that occasion he was

¹ Try "very exquisite and delicious."

good enough to give his author's morals a handsome testimonial in view of the current scandals. "I don't believe, sir," he said to me, "I don't believe Mr. Swinburne ever" [let us say "made himself like the young man in the seventh chapter of Proverbs] in his life!" I must confess that I liked Hotten: while even if he had been guiltless of the "pig-faced puppy" (an anticipation of the Schipperke?), I don't think I could ever have liked Quaritch.

II. *Athanasius Gasker*.—How many people have read *The Library of Useless Knowledge*, by Athanasius Gasker, Esq., F.R.S., etc. etc., London, William Pickering, MDCCCXXXVII? I suppose most of its living readers (if they run to a "most") have been set on it by a passage in Edward FitzGerald's *Letters* to Sir Frederick Pollock (May 11, 1842). "I have just been reading the great *Library* of Athanasius. Certainly, only you and I and Thackeray understand it. . . . I have laughed outright. How seldom does one

do this alone!" I myself was in a way *extra-set* on it by this, for I had already heard of it from members of the Pollock family; and after some not few years, in 1904, I succeeded in getting a copy. This, when my library in Edinburgh came to naught, I gave to the late Mr. W. P. Ker, it being a sort of understanding that it might perhaps ultimately rest in the mighty Codrington library of All Souls College, Oxford.¹

The book, or rather pamphlet, is in 4to, containing only as many pages as there are weeks in the year, but affording space for a beautiful example of Pickering's famous title-page, a capital specimen of Whittingham's print, and a magnificent rubricated dedication—"Illustrissimae Ornatissimae ac Excellentissimae Victoriae Reginae Tutelae Speique Britanniae"—in the year of whose accession it appeared.

There may seem to be scant room for a

¹ Ker's sudden death might have interfered with this consummation. But Miss C. A. Ker, most kindly and unasked, restored the book *to* me, and All Souls was good enough to accept it directly *from* me. So Gasker reposes with his brother immortals in "Codrington" at last.

“ library ” in fifty-two pages, even though they be quarto, especially as the print is about the size of that of a church Bible. But it is only the first part (Part II., on “ The Nature and Conditions of Truth,” is announced on the back, but never appeared, and never by any reader with an ounce of brains could have been expected to appear)—a Part properly enough devoted to an “ Auto-biographical Sketch of the Editor.” That “ there was no such a person ” as A. Gasker need hardly be said. The editor-author was really E. W. Clarke, a Cambridge contemporary of the three personages mentioned above, about whose own personality I have never been able to learn much, if anything, having unluckily met with the book too late to ask the late Sir Frederick Pollock himself, and Sir Frederick’s sons not knowing much detail. But I seem to have gathered that he died pretty early and was not exactly a success in life.

This last point will surprise no one who has the slightest acquaintance with the book. It is indeed probable that seven out of ten readers at

least will not get beyond a few pages, and will drop it in moods—varying according to the temper, brains, and literary experience of the individual—of contempt, disgust, or indignation, as a piece of dull and impertinent extravagance, “thorn-crackling” false wit, or simple idiocy. Nobody who does not admit “divine Nonsensia” to the possession of really goddess-like qualities can possibly rejoice in it. But to those from the outbuildings or precincts at least of whose Pantheon that dear creature is not utterly banished—at worst to some of them—it will surely appeal.

The thing is, as must appear even from the not very “ingoing” details as yet given, a pure *fatrasie* or *amphigouri*, except that it has the curious *aura* or suggestion of something *not* nonsensical in any sense, which French since the sixteenth century has lost,¹ and of which English since that same century has always more or less kept hold. There is—as there often if not always is in such things—a touch of under-

¹ To do M. Anatole France justice, he has come nearest to recovering it.

graduate wit in it—one can easily imagine Thackeray and FitzGerald and Pollock experiencing over it that curious thrill of reminiscence of the Time of Roses so well known to many of us. But it is of more than undergraduate strength. It reminds one most of the flavour of the *Rolliad* on the one side and the *Anti-Jacobin* on the other in the generation before its own, though it contains nothing directly political.

“The Commissioners of the Poor Laws will understand me when I say that I was born at Putney in Surrey. I repeat the name of my birthplace—PUTNEY—without any angry feeling towards, but in defiance of, the Registration Committee” is at once suggestive of Laurence (or whoever it was, who wrote on Sir Cecil Wray), and of the admirable annotations of Mr. Higgins on the great Epic.

But Athanasius did not stay in Putney. He wandered all over the world in search—and became finally possessed—of *Knowledge*! Twice he tells us of this possession. Alas! however, as

so often happens in such cases, he experienced Persecution! As early as the year 1797 he was placed in a barrel of brown sugar at Potsdam, before the Royal Family of Prussia, because he had furnished the Queen of that country with a private whispering apparatus (obviously an early telephone), by which she was enabled to counter-order the King's smoked goose for supper without his knowledge. He escaped with difficulty and returned to England, but found that it had ceased to be the land of chivalry, and that nothing was to be done in it without Notoriety. How, then, to obtain this?

An attack upon the Lord Mayor's carriage, carried out by schoolboys with squibs, and alms-house old women with bolsters, was to some extent—the extent of a month in Newgate—successful. But this was only the first step towards his main object—the Elucidation of Truth—and when, coming out of prison, he published an “alphabet” or primer entitled *Tenebrae* or *The Invisible-Visible*, in 6 vols. folio (London,

1799), it was suppressed! Still, the Clergy got wind of it, and had a secret meeting in the cellars of the London Docks on the subject. Athanasius is not too severe on the Clergy. They are *not* "ignorant." "*On the contrary they know too little. Their knowledge is limited by a circumference whose radius is so small that they know almost everything; almost everything, that is, within that small circumference.*" (Upon my word, there is almost preternatural wisdom in this apparent absurdity!) But he had to be present at this meeting of conspirators against him, and by the help of a friend he was. It was not likely that the inventor of the Potsdam telephone and the waylayer of the Lord Mayor should be there for nothing. He himself placed six large macaws and two or three other articles in the hogshead from which the Archbishop of Canterbury was to orate; he stationed some sailors in an empty vat at the other end of the cellar "with a few things which he instructed them when and how to make use of"; and all was ready.

A considerable portion of the book is occupied by a description of this meeting and a report of the speech of the Archbishop, delivered (please note this) *sitting*, and then comes the catastrophe. The "articles" and "things"—gimlets, packing—needles, fireworks—come into play; the macaws are let loose to scream and smash the lamps—and the curtain drops.

It rises again (after a sort of monochoric address or parabasis of a serious character) at a Kensington Ladies' School—*not* Miss Pinkerton's (which, it will be remembered, was farther west, though not indeed by this time removed to Rodwell Regis)—to the Lady Patronesses of which Athanasius gives an address on "The Sexes of Facts and the Economy of Discussion."¹ The last twenty pages of the pamphlet are occupied by this and its calamitous ending, in moral shock and physical conflagration, with—

¹ The rather apocalyptic-prophetic character of the booklet appears strongly here. The title to some extent anticipates the proceedings of Copec" (*v. inf.*).

not as an actual last word, but nearly so—this announcement:

“Ye men of England! I LIVE! Yes: the Old Blue Baby, the old plethoric and wanton Star!”

If anybody is proof against the rhythm, the picture, and the trumpet music of this sentence he will never appreciate Athanasius Gasker.

Of course—to become entirely serious—anybody may say, “This sort of stuff isn’t worth appreciating, and pretence of appreciation either *is* pretence or argues mere foolishness on the part of the appreciator.” Well, that happens to be the question. There is no doubt that for some time past, though we have never lacked nonsense—there *can* be no lack of nonsense while man is man—we have not had this sort of nonsense. But is that a thing to be rejoiced over? It really would sometimes seem as if, except in the rarest cases, people nowadays were divided between the grimmest seriousness and an opposite mood—a state of mind for which it is difficult to find an

adequate and accurate description, but of which "going to the pictures" is the most democratic symptom—a craving for amusement supplied to the utmost possible extent from without, and requiring the least possible contribution, especially of an intellectual kind, from within. I do not mean that the barrel of brown sugar, and the collapse of the Archbishop on the packing-needles at the Docks, and the upsetting of the packet of asafœtida, and the consequent conflagration at Kensington might not amuse some "movie"-lovers; but these, except as chequering the entertainment and finishing off its episodes, are not the things that please *us*. What does please *us* is the atmosphere of reckless fancy; the implied satire on *clichés* of political, scientific, and so forth, thought and speech; the sense of the *ludicrum humani saeculi*; of "what fools *we* mortals be." To get at these things you must go some way towards them; you must have the will and the power so to go, and have learnt the way itself. As I first finished this paper I saw in another—of

the "news" variety—that £600,000, rising to a million, was being spent on "amusement *devices*" at Wembley. Alas! for people who have to be "deviced" into amusement—at a great or even at a small cost! Whereas to attain or retain the power and freedom of amusing *oneself* with no, or little, mechanical assistance, what cost, what price could be too great?

III. *Fish*.—I can give no reason for it, but it has always seemed to me that dinner—the evening meal properly called dinner—is not dinner without fish.¹ Fish is excellent at breakfast—I think even Peacock, who did not like the Scotch, admits excellence in them on this head—but it is not

¹ "I can dine with it, but not *well* without it," to alter slightly the last line of a charming couplet of Dryden's, which some people who write about him would never recognise as his:

" My ravished eyes behold such charms about her
I can die with her, but not live without her "

—a good instance of the mellifluous if half-melancholy music which the double rhyme gives when it is kept from being comic. But perhaps this is one of the quotations which a wise Greek would have checked with *Εὐφρήμει*, lest the music should turn to melancholy only.

necessary there—not *constitutive*. In the middle of the day, things that have lived in the waters may support life in persons that live on the earth; but, as it seems to me, not many of such things, and those not many, cold. Now cold food is not primarily proper at dinner. Oysters, lobsters, cold salmon, other cold fish (the general goodness of which is much neglected in England) will serve at luncheon; but I have never cared for hot fish then. At dinner, on the other hand, things seem wrong without it. You can—putting religious motives entirely apart—dine with nothing else: you cannot—at least I cannot, as I have already said—feel that you have dined well unless you have had it. Soup I have never cared for much: its transposition, from the middle or towards the end of dinner—where, as everybody who knows his *Polite Conversation* knows, it used to figure—to the beginning, seems to me to have been a great mistake. *Then* it could “make up” for a person still hungry and be refused by one who was not so: *now* it spoils appetite without

satisfying it. But fish is at once solid enough and not too solid for a preface.

Perhaps some part of the attraction of fish is due to its ancient reputation and to the difficulty, till very modern times, in getting it. Was any such fuss ever made about any single article of food as about a certain turbot, well known in Roman history or satire? How Milton dwells on the fishy part of that treacherous banquet in the Wilderness! As late as the middle of the nineteenth century, a novelist, not of the common rank, made "surmullet and John Dory" specimens of feasting, though some thirty or forty years after he wrote, a pleasant fishwife in the Falmouth market told me that the most beautiful of fish were sold by their captors to middlemen at six shillings a dozen, all round, large or small.¹ Even

¹ She didn't complain at all; in fact she told me that her husband and (I think) two sons had caught twenty dozen red mullet in the Helford River a night or two before. And they were not Poplar window-cleaners, you see. By the way, can any one tell me why this fish sometimes changes its "good red gold" into a sort of half-brassy, half-silvery colour? It doesn't seem necessarily to affect the flavour; but it ruins the beauty.

since the War, Billingsgate has sometimes been content to price the *poisson de Saint-Pierre*, thumb-mark and all, at 9d. a pound, if not less.

It is a great pity that the remarkable variety of fish is so little recognised in the majority of middle-class households. I cannot go the whole way with the doubtless praiseworthy attempts sometimes made to extend the consumption of fresh-water fish other than trout and salmon. Grayling are indeed excellent; and I have hardly ever seen them on a fishmonger's slab, even in towns close to rivers that abound in them. Gudgeon are capital treated white-bait fashion. A "Bassenthwaite pike" boasts itself to be far above all other lukes, whether they call themselves pike or jack;¹ and I have eaten one. It was not bad; but it

¹ There seems to be no more unsettled point than this, "When is a pike a jack, and when isn't he?" I think I have seen 7 lb. fixed as the weight at which "jack" becomes pike. But the handsomest, though not the largest fish of the kind I ever saw—13½ lb. in weight, grass-green and silver instead of the dirty colouring this discreditable creature usually shows, and caught in the Avon at Bath—was called a "jack," while the Bassenthwaite "pike" which an amiable landlady at Keswick insisted on my eating before I left the Lakes was certainly not more than 2 or 3 lb. at most.

would be excessive to call it very good. Nearly all freshwater fish, outside the Salmonidæ—and the pike especially—seem to me to be cumbered with too many bones—small, but all the more intrusive. As for the pike, he is a sort of porcupine, with very fine quills plastered over with a little flesh. Perch challenges flounder for zootje, I believe. All the rest, except char—and this is best in those pretty but delusive flat pots which are 50 per cent in thickness china, 25 melted butter, and the rest fish—and eels—all the rest, I say, are, I suspect, best left alone. And as for eels, the Ingoldsbian line:

Have them spitchcocked or stewed—they're too oily when fried, gives—as usual with its author on any subject he handles — “the conclusion of the whole matter.”

But the real fact is that we must turn, to quote again, but from a very different poet and a young lady—Mr. Barry Cornwall and Miss Ethel Newcome—to

The sea, the sea, the open sea,
The blue, the fresh, the ever free,

for *real* fish. The salmon derives all his merit, as well as his size, from his sea-trips; sea trout are much better than lake or river;¹ and if, according to the proverb, there are better fish in the sea than ever came out of it, they must be very good fish indeed. Those that do come out of it are quite good enough for me.

Of course some are better than others, which involves the less complimentary way of putting it—that some are worse than others. Of the many strange things which have happened since the War, one of the strangest—to me—has been the occasional, if not regular, promotion of halibut in price over turbot. I would nearly as soon pay more for a turnip than for an apple. I am not myself very fond of plaice, though some things of the plaice kind, such as those which in their native Scotland bear the queer names of “whitches” and “megrimms,” “grey soles,” etc., are quite

¹ Brook or burn trout make excellent *friture*; but so do gudgeon.

good, and lemon soles (which have a dozen different names¹ in different places) sometimes not bad.

But all these come far below the *real* sole—the “English” sole, as the Scotch call it, by no means as a compliment and rather incomprehensibly. For the best soles used to be understood to come, before it was over-dredged or trawled, from the famous Silver Pit in the North Sea; and the most cantankerous Englishman never grudged Scotland her at least equal claim on that other Mediterranean. The merit of the sole proper consists—as indeed does the comparative merit of all fish—in its superior *firmness*. “The woollier the worser,” said the wise man. Halibut is woolly; so is plaice; so (sometimes) is even brill, which at its best is quite turbot’s equal. How different is

¹ My Falmouth Maggie Mucklebackit (only she was much politer than poor Steenie’s mother) gave me a list, of which “*merry sole*” is the one that has most abided with me, except those in the text. “Dab” appears to be a name of many applications, ranging from a large flounder to a small plaice. He used to be good at Brighton, though Brighton has always seemed to me a better place in literature than in life.

this from the solidity of salmon, especially when fresh caught and boiled in salt water, after being cut into "fids" not more than two inches thick; from the rigidity of mullet, "stiff as pokers," as the city man says in *Destiny*; and, once more, from the firmness of sole¹ itself, though it is not a tenth the thickness of the salmon and not half that of the mullet!

Grey mullet, though of course not approaching red either in beauty or savour, are very good to eat, in the Channel Islands, for instance, though, I think, best of all at the mouth of the Bristol Channel, say at Tenby. They labour, indeed, under an imputation of deserving the very ugly name of "foul feeders," being found in places and neighbourhoods where one would rather they were *not* found. Not long ago, how-

¹ Sole is perhaps, like almost everything else, best grilled; but frying and boiling come not much behind, if properly done. For *cold* sole there is a matchless way—Jewish, I believe, in origin, though as I know it, it came from the fair and deft hands of a Christian and English lady—of frying in oil, so that the fish becomes covered with delectable blobs and bladders. It can't be too cold—"may be iced, indeed, with advantage," as the wine-lists say of white Bordeaux.

ever, an excellent fishmonger cleared them for me from the worst of this in a manner which, as it happened, had a positively literary interest of association. It will be remembered that when the *pieuvre* got hold of Clubin and dragged, after drowning him, that scoundrel down to the mouth of its den, it had no intention of eating the fellow itself, but kept him as a bait for the little crabs, which it did eat; repeating the process, unsuccessfully, on Gilliat. Now the grey mullets' presence at sewer-mouths, etc., is accounted for in a similar manner. *They* want the crabs, who, in their crabbed fashion, come to eat unpleasant things, and not the things themselves. Which is, I repeat, both directly and indirectly interesting.

One of the minor mysteries of creation is the great superiority of the haddock—the opposition “fish of St. Peter”—in Scotland over the same fish caught south of Tweed and Solway. I do not mean “yellow” “Finnan” or “Findon” haddocks—most patriotic Scots have, to my

surprise, told me that the best of these are smoked in the east of London—but the actual ordinary “white fish.” They are hardly eatable with us, while, whether “crappit-head”-ed, or plain, or in the curious mixture called “fish-and-sauce,” they are excellent up there. On the other hand, “white pollack,” which is capital eating when caught in the Channel, is scorned, I believe, and justly so, as “lythe” by the Caledonian stern and wild.

Sprats¹ and herring have often served as texts for moralling on the excellence of cheap and common food. They *are* rather marvellous, not merely for their excellence, simple of themselves, but for their extraordinary patience of sophistication. Smoke them, kipper, pickle, pot, drown in oil sardine-fashion—always if they don’t come right it’s not *their* fault. *Fresh* sardines, by the way, are better than fresh pilchards, though both

¹ During the tyranny of Dora one often wished for a Hogarth to depict “The Sprat Cart” in the streets of an inland town. The way in which folk of all grades rushed at the news of it was comic.

are good. For fresh *herring* the small Moray Firth ones are the best I know, though I don't wish to insult those of Loch Fyne or our own western shoals. Mackerel, another cheap fish, is not, I think, nearly as unwholesome as some would hold it. It is best grilled—if preserved, as much as possible, from any “richness” but its own—or boiled, not *sloppily*.¹

Alas! there are so many fishes, and so little room to deal with them. Skate is one of the few (*v. inf.*) with which sauce, and a particular sauce, is almost necessary. Skate with black butter and skate without it are like beef with mustard and beef without that. (By the way, fresh herring should always have mustard sauce; and all cold fish is better for a mixture of mustard and oil.)

¹ Good people sometimes like it “soused,” but it does not, I think, pickle as well as salmon or even herring. Why, even before the War and the rise in price and fall in quantity, did pickled salmon become so much less common in London? Even long after the days of Mesdames Gamp and Prig you could hardly pass an eating-house or tavern (not a mere gin-shop) from Charing Cross to Aldgate, let alone purlieus, without seeing pickled salmon in the window. How many would you have found, so provided, even in the first fifteen years of this century?

Cod is a very curious creature. Of course if you smother it, fresh with oyster sauce or salt with egg ditto (don't *powder* the egg!) the quality of the mere fish matters little. In itself it varies from a most palatable substance to boiled Marcella quilt.

Fain would I talk of still more outside animals—gurnet, not good for much *here*, but there is a Norwegian fish of the kind which you sometimes get in Scotland, and which is excellent;¹ sea-bream, which its lovers may keep to themselves; bass, which its London costermonger-name of “white salmon” flatters in both ways unblushingly; conger—I never cared much for the standard conger *soup* of the Channel Islands, but steaks of not too large fish grilled and sprinkled with curry-powder are good; the much abused dog-fish, which, however, the fish-wives in north-eastern Scotland are said confidentially to declare

¹ Why does one never see, in southern England at least, the small Norwegian crayfish-lobsters, about a span long, which are also common in Edinburgh fish-shops? But perhaps they have reached London in the last few years.

to possess mysterious virtues, and which can match the fish in the *Arabian Nights* for colour.¹ For oddments there are the *lançons* or sand-eels, which picnic parties dig and cook and eat in the Fortunate Isles just mentioned; the elegant and agreeable garfish, called "greenbone" from its skeleton of emerald-coloured bones; and the curious but very dainty miniature soles, not bigger than small flounders and running eight or nine to the pound, which are called "thickbacks," which, I believe, come from Torbay, but which I have never eaten, or indeed seen, except at Bath. Bath has always been a centre of fish distribution: do they not say that Quin first brought John Dory to London from this city? ²

But there is an important postscript to this inadequate eulogy of the Larder of Amphitrite.

¹ A man, rowing me once inland from St. Mawes, had in the bow of the boat a pile of these fish literally brass, copper, purple, and green, besides the usual fish-grey, in colour.

² Where, it may be asked, are smelts, delicate, violet-tasted, silvery? Well, they have all these merits but—they disagree with me. Lampreys I have never eaten.

Nearly a hundred years ago—over eighty, anyhow—Thackeray, who rarely went wrong¹ on matters of eating and drinking, protested against the French habit of messing up fish, and upheld the English one of plain boiling, frying, grilling, etc. We were, and still are, not guiltless in this respect. Lobster sauce on salmon was frightfully bad heraldry: salmon should have no sauce, but a little of the salt or salted water it was boiled in. The everlasting melted butter was superfluous, to say the least. Shrimp sauce is best eaten (if there are shrimps enough) by itself; and oyster sauce is a waste of oysters. A sole *à la Normande* of the more extravagant kind, with all manner of shell-fish and mushrooms and Heaven knows what else stuck about it, is a copper-gilt lily. Mustard, pepper (red and black), salt are all right, and with the more tasteless fishes anchovy or Worcester, etc., may be permitted, while mayonnaise is not to be forbidden now and then. But “Can’t you let him alone?” here, as in a great many other

¹ But why did he call slips (=small soles) “coarse”?

things, from politics to potatoes, is the Counsel of Perfection.¹

IV. *Accidia*.—Everybody who knows his or her Dante—indeed everybody who has more than the most rudimentary knowledge of his or her Chaucer—is acquainted, more or less, with the name and nature of that insidious as well as “accidious” Deadly Sin which we most inadequately translate “Sloth.” In past years I must have read a good deal of mediæval discussion of it, besides Dante’s and Chaucer’s references: but in my present booklessness (lacking even a small Ducange) I forget when the word came into existence, and either blocked out or ousted *Pigritia* as a name for that malady of body and mind succumbing to which makes the sin. The original Greek, ἀκηδία or ἀκηδεία, does not seem

¹ Lemon is of course almost necessary with white-bait, of which I have said nothing here, having dealt with it elsewhere, and good with most small fish *en friture*. Also the old Greenwich salmon with piccalilli was good if rather barbaric. But these are exceptions. The rule holds. Complexes of tastes are only for the civilised savage—the worst savage of all.

to have meant much more than its own literal translation "carelessness" or "indifference," with a medical specialisation of "torpor." *Accidia* means a great deal more than that.

It means, indeed, so much that, though there is a certain connection between the two main halves of its meaning, or at least usage, that connection by no means always holds, and the halves present themselves independently. The "slothful man" or "sluggard," who is wholly or mainly aimed at, say, in Spenser's great Procession of the Sins and in Dr. Watts's agreeable little poem, is indeed far from virtuous. But he is sometimes—nay, often—not at all unamiable and quite cheerful as long as you let him sleep undisturbed, and supply him when he wakes with moderate if metaphorical "bread and cheese"—"the table-flap, the mutton bone, and Mary" of that pleasant lyric by the author of *Dr. Syntax*, which to some extent supplements and to some *contravoices* "The Voice of the Sluggard." But he who—unless he takes a good deal of pains and is well holpen of

spiritual powers—is destined to the hopeless *accidioso fummo* of Hell, or the still hopeful but extremely unpleasant toiling race¹ of Purgatory, is of a very different temper from this. He is very often not “slothful” at all. I know one specimen who has probably done double, if not treble, the work of most workers of his class without complaining or feeling any desire to complain. He is not contemptuous of the table-flap or the mutton bone (though he would perhaps rather have beef), least of all of Mary. But in the intervals of table-flapping and mutton-boning—perhaps even of Marying, though Mary, or rather her ancestress Eve, was obviously the original designed preventive and panacea for Accidia—there comes upon the Accidious man the terrible curse indicated in the terrible line of Lucretius:

Adde quod in nigras lethargi mergitur undas.

¹ I have always thought that there must have been some additional unpleasantness of which we are not told. In mere running there is not much, if any; but of course if all the runners were at breaking-down point, and yet had to go on, it would be nasty.

Observe (you can't observe too carefully in Lucretius,¹ especially when that warning—and passing—bell of the *Adde quod* sounds) the *mergitur*. The sort of fretfulness which may be occasioned by the hinges of the table-flap losing a screw, by the mutton bone *not* being beef or by its having nothing on it (in which case, I am bound to say that at the Albion in old days they always gave you another if you had the sense to ask for it), or by Mary being late or having her hair done the wrong way, does not count. All this *mergitur* with the victim, and does not even keep him company in the black waves of accidious lethargy.

Of this sort of thing, of the accidents as well as the properties of Accidia, we have of course in English one peerless Thesaurus or Encyclopædia, *The Anatomy of Melancholy*; and to want Burton altered in any way would be flagitious. We have an unintentional burlesque of it in Byron. It is, or was, supposed by foreigners to be a national disease, and in the eighteenth century the Faculty

¹ *V.* the Scrap on him.

used to write books on it as such or as "The Spleen." But what I cannot remember at the present moment is a really curial Anglican discourse on Accidia as a *sin*—though such discourses must exist, and though there is much more authority for regarding it as sinful than for doing this with the other national habit of "wagering." Donne would have done it best from one point of view and in the style of one period, but has he? Butler could, from another and in another, but "Resentment" only comes near, not up to, the case.

The main point of interest is this. Are you bound to be always "joyful," as a very tautologous hymn seems to assume? Must you continue your joy in good things when the flap is down, the bone picked clean, and Mary gone or cross?¹ Is not continued exultation—I do not say thankfulness—a temptation to Nemesis? Further, do not the

¹ Perhaps I ought to say, for the benefit of very literal persons, that the flap and the bone altogether, and even Mary to some extent, are allegorical. Whether Combe borrowed the idea from the better known *du pain, du vin, du fromage et la première venue* of Duclos or not, he certainly improved immensely on that.

black waves of lethargy rise naturally round—one had almost said, do they not spring from the natures of—some people, while others are as naturally free from them? “Surely, surely” (as Mrs. Proudie would say), this is the case.

I suppose the real translation of *Accidia* in English is not “Sloth,” but “Discontent.” And here we get our direct and Deadly Sin without difficulty. Most people, from cooks to dukes, have something that they ought to do, and if they through sloth do not do it, they undoubtedly commit sin. But in merely doing nothing when there is nothing to do, I cannot discern anything positively sinful. On the other hand, discontent is quite obviously sinful, and yet it is, for some, so hard to avoid when the black waves rise or the black showers rain!

And the curious thing is that while you may and should resist it, you can't abstain from it, though it is a sin with no sort of solace, such as *Luxury*, *Gluttony*, and *Avarice* have in the most concrete fashion, and *Pride*, *Anger*, and even

Envy (to the envious) have in their more abstract and indirect way. A form—or at least a corruption—of Melancholy, it has forfeited the charms and solaces which the non-sinful varieties¹ of that passion still reserve: and perhaps this is why no heavier punishment and purification was imposed on the Accidious than that which suited his slothful brother or variety—that of running, enforced and weary, round Purgatory Hill.

For after all Accidia is, except in the worst cases, only a sort of corruption of that sense of Vanity which has no small license allowed to it in the Scriptures. It *is* a corruption, and so capable of being very bad; but kept within bounds by steady resistance, it need be hardly bad at all, and is certainly a symptom of nobler nature and keener intellect than the placid contentment which sits and twiddles its thumbs and smiles.²

¹ I suspect, however, that Melancholy is not unapt to slip into “*Accidie*.” Indeed the Lucretian warning implies this.

² No dishonour is intended, in these last two lines, to that attitude of the 23rd Psalm which is the glorified opposite of Accidia itself. But only to few is this easy of attainment. (*V. inf.* in “*Crumbs*” for more.)

V. *Byron*.—It was of course certain—as a matter of fact to be expected, and subject to no reasonable objection—that the centenary of the death of Byron would witness energetic and amiable attempts to rebuild or refurbish the tomb of that prophet.¹ Not, indeed, that such attempts would be by any means the first of their kind. The *History of Literary Reputations* is another of the books I should like to have written. It is exceedingly curious, and has been very little

¹ This Scrap was not merely written but in the printer's hands when Lord Rosebery proposed, and divers persons of distinction hastened to second, the commemoration, at last, of Byron in *the "Abbey."* Nothing here, whatever the words may suggest, in the very least opposes or contravenes that proposal, all my objections to his poetry being essentially *comparative*, and the use of the word "tomb" having been purely metaphorical. I think Byron *should* have that tablet, or whatever it was to have been. One cannot, of course, treat disrespectfully the scruples of the Dean and Chapter. But is it not a little unfortunate that our modern Anglican dignitaries should be so often more scrupulous than their Master? *He* "came eating and drinking," and was called a wine-bibber; *He* provided wine (and *more* wine) for ordinary festivities; *He* made it the joint medium or vehicle of the greatest and most extraordinary Rite of any religion. *They* (or some of them) do what they can to stint and frustrate its use. *He* said, "Neither do I condemn thee" to a culprit of a certain sort taken in flagrant delict. *They* exclude, from a perfectly well understood form of commemoration, one of the same class who has "sinned no more" for a hundred years. (Again *v.* "Crumbs.")

touched upon. But I do not know any exact parallel to Byron's fate, in this way, from the historical point of view. The examples of rocket and stick are frequent enough. The examples of fresh charging of the rocket, to give it a new chance of fixing itself as a star, or at least of attempts to elevate the stick to a comfortable and more or less permanent position in a respectable rack, are not so very rare. But the immense and not merely, though largely, vulgar popularity of Byron (which, it must be remembered, was rather helped than hindered by the personal scandals about him) in his own and immediately succeeding times; with its steady decline, despite sturdy efforts now and then to revive it, correspond, even allowing fair latitude, to nothing that, at the moment, presents itself to my fairly instructed and not much as yet, I hope, dilapidated memory.

The problem illustrates and enforces two different positions, which should never be, and far too often are, forgotten in relation to literary criticism. One is, "If you possibly can, keep the

man out of view altogether in your estimate of the *work*." The other is, "If you can't do that, keep the two estimates entirely separate." Forget all about Harriet when you are reading *Hellas*. Do not, when you are assessing the merit of anything, from *Hours of Idleness* to *Don Juan*, trouble yourself with the fact that Byron certainly had one of the worst fathers, one of the worst mothers, and one of almost the worst wives¹ possible, or at least recorded. Above all, keep politics out. I have a right to say this, first because I have never myself allowed the said politics to interfere with my estimate, either of Shelley, who was, or thought himself, a missionary of Anarchism, Atheism, and almost everything else that I object to most; or of Moore, who began by being an Irish rebel and ended as a steady Whig partisan. Also I should

¹ The detestableness of Lady Byron is curious. If her portraits do not belie her, you can see something of it in her face. It is the incarnation of primmery, prudery, and she-priggishness—nearly the three worst things in woman and quite the worst for such a man as poor Byron. I have always believed in the famous saying, "Any lady could have kept my lord all right, *except* my lady." ("Got on with" will do quite as well.)

be obliged to any one who will tell me what Byron's politics were. He was rude to kings, to *other* "aristocrats" (we shall return to that word), to some Tory commoners; he talked windily about Freedom, being himself as "harbitrary a cove" in his dealings with others as ever lived; I never heard that he was much interested in "the poor," though he took good care, in his own words, not to be "stinted of his own sizings"; and if there is any trace in his poems or in his letters of any reasoned political creed or ideas on his part, I must have strangely forgotten things. He rather, it is true, disliked his own country, which naturally made him popular abroad, and does so still with persons who do not love it at home. Also, we are told—this point is apparently now being taken up with special vigour—he was at once a member, a product and a victim of the wicked English aristocracy itself, as well as a rebel against it.

That he was a product and a member of it—wicked or not wicked—there is no doubt: he

would have made things unpleasant if you had doubted, disputed, or neglected to show signs of some knowledge of *that*.¹ And I hold no brief for the nobility of the English eighteenth century. Most of them were Whigs, for one thing, and hardly one of them, Tory or Whig, did what he might have done, with chances unparalleled in history, for upholding and securing sound political order in the country. But to represent ² them in a body as possessing the combined characteristics of Heliogabalus, Cæsar Borgia, and that Count of Charolois who traditionally brought on the French Revolution by "potting" at tilers and slaters for the fun of seeing them tumble off the roofs, is really rather—where shall I find a civil epithet?—

¹ My good friend and successor, Professor Grierson, seems to admit that Byron was a snob, but to think that, as an Englishman, he couldn't help it. To deal more seriously with Professor Grierson's handling of Byron, if I think him on a wrong track with the aristocracy matter, he is probably right as to the evil effect of Calvinism on Byron. That most damning (some add most damnable) of creeds does undoubtedly, in more than one way, as the 17th Article ingeniously and picturesquely points out, incline men to "wretchlessness of most unclean living."

² Of course I am exaggerating, but not, I think, unfairly, and most certainly not malevolently exaggerating, Professor Grierson's presentation.

let us say, the reverse of wise. How many scions of this Tree of Vice, contemporary with Byron himself—let it be remembered that if he had lived to threescore and ten and a little more he would have had the felicity of seeing the Exhibitions not merely of '51, but of '62—were perfectly sober and respectable members of society? ¹

And, after all, what *does* it matter?

To put, once more, his name instead of Diderot's in one of the greatest of the many great words or sets of words uttered by Thomas Carlyle, "Byron did it, and not we; Byron suffers for it, and not we; Peace be with Byron." In which amiable and admirable frame of mind let us also once more rejoice in, and thank God for, the fact that we know nothing about Homer, and practically nothing about Shakespeare (it is curious how the multiplication of so-called discoveries about him

¹ A very few words will put all that *I* have to say of "the noble poet" as a man. He never *was* a man so much as a child (with or without the *e*), and a naughty child—as children usually are—for the *sake* of naughtiness. If he did what Lady Byron did or did not accuse him of doing, I feel certain that it was only for the sake of being quite extraordinarily naughty.

constantly turns to *floccipilinaucification*) as far as any real knowledge goes. It is generally thought a crime to destroy evidence; but I almost think it would be pardonable to do so if anything really discreditable, or even anything importantly characteristic in a favourable way, turned up about "William." For though neither would have the slightest effect upon my appreciation of his Poems or Plays, or upon that of any real critic, I am afraid that would hardly be the case with some others. Suppose for a moment that the folly of the Anti-Stratfordians were *not* entirely folly, that some person, especially some noble person of whom we do know something, were proved to be the author; that a diary or even a letter, of his or some one's, were found containing real scandal about Southampton, Mary Fitton, and all the rest of them. Good Heavens, what a to-do there would be! We ought to be grateful to Moore for the burning of Byron's Memoirs, even though it may seem to have been an act of petty treason.

The Neo-Byronists sometimes seem to regard

what *does* matter—the position and value of Byron in English poetry—as almost or altogether subordinate to such considerations as that of his being contemporary with profiteers and victims of war, or of his being himself the victim of “aristocracy.” Some of them would even request us to pay little or no attention to the work which really *made* him popular—the first two cantos of *Childe Harold* and the tales in the manner of Scott—insisting that we ought to start with him when he left England for good, and when, as all competent criticism agrees, the shock of the circumstances of that departure struck hitherto unseen fire out of him. But this will hardly do. It is of course quite true that some poets of the greatest final value begin badly or in an undistinguished way. Shelley and Tennyson would settle that offhand; and *Hours of Idleness* can be “written off” as justly as *Victor and Cazire* and the *Poems by Two* [or ‘Three’] *Brothers*. It might happen, perhaps, though I do not remember an example, that a great poet might not write, or at any rate publish, any verse at all till

he was advanced in years. But that such a bulk of it should be produced, and subsequently by advocates discarded as almost worthless, is surely odd?

Satire will improve with practice, and Byron, whose gift of satire was undoubtedly great, arrived in *Don Juan* at something like consummateness in a particular kind of meaning, with a metre to suit it which is almost matchless,¹ though elsewhere he was not always metrically strong. Rhetoric improves with practice; and Byron was a rhetorician born. Moreover, satire and rhetoric are exactly the things to be stung—a better word even than shocked—into full display by such a catastrophe as that which came on him. I have sometimes thought that stress enough has not been laid (if, indeed, even this were worth while) on the evident *disappointment*—the surprised and enraged disappointment—which he felt on and from this time. He had, like the child he was,

¹ I have been accused of “a curious rancour” against Byron. If I am guilty of that, it is still more curious that I should, as some good judges have allowed, have done almost more justice to this metre than anybody else has done.

expected to be a gallant among gallants, a wit among wits, a lord among lords. Unluckily, in a double way for him, he *was* the first for a time, only to find that he was not a satisfactory gallant to his own wife—one of the most annoying things possible to a person of his disposition, I should think, and, indeed, not pleasant to anybody. He had sense enough to see that as a wit among wits he was at best among equals, where the same disposition exacted superiority. And I shrewdly suspect¹ that his brother lords did not make anything like the fuss over him—if they made any at all—that he desired.

Now such a state of things will spur a man in satire and in rhetoric, no doubt; it may even, as the racing people say, “get every ounce out of him” in the way of poetry. But you can only get out what is in already, and how many ounces of poetry were there in Byron?

Some, no doubt; but of what kind and degree? I aroused a little indignation years ago by reporting

¹ Indeed the fact is pretty certain, and, I think, admitted.

a test I had made of reading Byron and then reading other poetry unquestionably of the highest rank, with the invariable result of finding that "the noble poet" somehow rang false.¹ I explained, of course, that this did not mean merely that he rang *different*. All the great poets do that. But there is something in the ring of all of them that *is* the same, and that is the indefinable but unmistakable spirit of poetry itself *in excelsis*. I cannot find that in Byron, unless I tune down my ear by reading him and nothing else, or nothing but the eighteenth-century poetry, which he really loved and really represented with a sort of changed costume. Even *Darkness*²—certainly the best thing he ever did—recalls the finales of the *Dunciad* and the *Vanity of Human Wishes*—both

¹ Mr. Garvin has recently put something like the same thought into an admirable laconism, pointing out (I have not his exact words before me) that when you read something really poetical *in* Byron it seems as if you were reading somebody else.

² Campbell is said, I hope falsely, to have claimed royalty on this. The claim is quite baseless, and Campbell was much too good a poet at his own best to need claims on other men's thunder. But it must be admitted that he was a grumbler confirmed.

fine, nay, almost magnificent things in their way—in being essentially rhetoric rather than poetry, though it is the most poetical rhetoric to be found anywhere out of Victor Hugo.

It would be quite out of scale here to go through Byron's voluminous work at any length, but I think it would be possible to show that not only when I admire Byron, as I very often do, but when his own champions admire Byron, it is for something outside pure poetry. *I* think *Don Juan* a delightful satirical story, with touches of pathos deftly thrown in, full of admirable description, and married, if not to immortal, to infinitely dexterous and suitable verse. *They* are so pleased with him for attacking the "stupidity" of George III. and the misbehaviour (Catilina Cethegum!) of George IV., that they are in raptures with *A Vision of Judgment*, which, as a poem, is no better than Southey's. *I* like *Sardanapalus* because I am sure I should have fallen in love with Myrrha, and because it would have been very nice if Myrrha had fallen in love with

me. *They* admire *Manfred* and *Cain* because they think the two boldly anticipate Biblical criticism, and because *Manfred* adumbrates the naughtiest naughtiness of Byron himself. All of us fix on something else than poetry.¹

Now if I at least rejoice in the poetry of Spenser or Shelley, Shakespeare or Milton, Coleridge or Tennyson, Heine or Hugo, it is directly *for* their poetry; sometimes for nothing else at all, yea! sometimes in spite of something else that I am very far from rejoicing in. I don't care who Constantia was, and though it is very delightful to be sung to by the right person, music is not my favourite art. But Shelley, when he addresses *his* Constantia, does enchant and float me and all the rest by mere magic of pure poetry. Byron never does that.

¹ To speak soberly, I find most *poetry* (there is some in *Don Juan* itself), outside *Darkness*, in parts of *Parisina* and the *Siege of Corinth*, of course in some of the later *Childe Harold*, in the good old "Assyrian came down" (the best thing of its peculiar kind after "Lochinvar" and "Bonnie Dundee"), and the almost exquisite "I come from thy garden of roses"—a capital thing in English prosody. *Mazeppa* is scarcely great poetry, but it is uncommonly good stuff.

One point perhaps remains to be treated. The almost unanimous approval of Byron on the Continent has sometimes been urged as a thing in his favour not to be neglected. Certainly it is not to be neglected, but it may and must be examined. And I am afraid that any complete and competent examination will not only reduce the value of this approval as set to Byron's credit, but will actually shift it to his *discredit*. What *is* it that foreigners admire—or think they admire—in Byron? Once more it is his matter, his temper, his spirit, his politics, not his poetry. At the time when he was most worshipped abroad very few Frenchmen, Spaniards, or Italians knew enough English to be able to get at that poetry where it existed; and though more Germans may have had the key, German opinion of English poetry has never been of much real value.¹ The understanding of almost all men, from Portugal

¹ If anybody cries "Shakespeare!" I am afraid I must disillusion him at once. On the points in Hamlet's soul, or the origin of *The Tempest*, the Germans may be useful; but these things have nothing to do with poetry.

to Petersburg and from Brest-en-Bretagne to Brest-Litovsk, must have been limited to his satire and his rhetoric, while their admiration and enjoyment were undoubtedly directed almost wholly to the *homo Byronicus*, that remarkable compound of spurious passion and theatrical fanfaronade of which his modern English admirers make as little as they can. I suppose recent, but not too recent, Continental opinion of the noble poet cannot be better put anywhere than in Dr. Brandes's *Headstreamings*. And if any one can find poetry in the true sense attributed to and made out for Byron there, he is more fortunate than I have been.

Some, however, of our home-rehabilitation is too amusing not to have a word. The last specimen of it which I read¹ regarded Byron as a wholesome purge of Victorianism; as a corroborative of "new" poetry, to be freed from the cloying sweetness of those about Tennyson, even those about Shelley and Keats, etc.; as, in fact,

¹ Not Professor Grierson's, I need hardly say.

one of the great factors of that great new world of which we hear so much and see so little, and which is apparently going to be *plus la même chose* with a *plusness* never yet approached. But even here the mysterious ill-fate of the noble poet accompanied him. For depreciation of Victorian poetry is more and more becoming a note, not of modernity or hodiernity, but of yesterdayness—the most terrible of all things to the really modern mind!

No: let us not be so hard on Byron as this. In life he escaped being King of Greece, so that a hundred years ago he was not wholly unlucky. A hundred years later it has been proposed that he (or his ghost?) shall become Poet Laureate to the League of Nations. The first impulse of the generous and discriminating admirer must be to cry “Not *again!*” But when one remembers what a satirist Byron was, and also (be it ever remembered to his credit) how very little apt he was to play the flatterer, it may seem that there would be “certain condolences, certain

vails ” which one may be a little sorry to lose.

VI. “ *Copec*. ”—In the days when Russian money, or Russian anything else, possessed value of any other kind than that of an “ awful example,” a copeck, I believe, was worth four centimes—the time also allowing standard value to these latter. Four centimes in those happy days came near enough to our halfpenny, though five were nearer, so that at any rate the symbolical and metaphorical values of the copeck and the halfpenny were very nearly identical—that is to say, both might be taken then (the copeck, how much more now!) as equivalent, if not to-nothing-at-all, to the almost smallest of values.

If this had been the reason why a company of very strange human creatures in the spring of this odd year chose the word—lopping its *k* (they were probably most of them spelling reformers) as phonetically useless, and putting in an *o*¹—to

¹ From Conference on Christian Politics, Economics, and Citizenship you can get Cocpeac and Cpecc but not Copec.

denominate "for short" their meeting for the discussion of things in general, it would have been about the only sign of common sense exhibited during the whole of their palaver, except when one or two outsiders attempted to convert them to sanity. Nevertheless the thing deserves some examination, for there were signs of the times in it which it would be ill to neglect.

Who was the original suggester and organiser of this queer conglomeration I do not positively know,¹ but one praise, if it *be* praise, may be given him, that he obviously knew his day and generation. Twelve hundred delegates, "representing" (we know what "representation" means nowadays) all branches of the Christian Church (except the Roman Catholic, which, as usual, "had more wit than to be there"), assembled at Birmingham, not, as is commonly the case, to "consider and report," but to consider Reports already made by mysterious "study

¹ Probably, *v. inf.* the Bishop of Manchester.

groups." Somebody procured amiable greetings from the King, who kindly but non-committally "looked forward" to their discussions; from the Archbishop of Canterbury, who began with a wise expression of impatience at the multiplication of conferences, and then passed to the polite generalities which archiepiscopal functions require; from three or four Premiers and ex-Premiers, etc. etc. And then they talked.

A person of some experience in public matters could of course negatively, if not positively, anticipate most of the talk from running down the "capitalised" names of the speakers in the newspaper columns. Negatively, for there were not many speakers of whom one had ever heard much before. Positively, for one knew what to expect from Lord Parmoor, the Bishop of Manchester (whose "show" it seems pretty largely to have been), and others; while surprises such as Canon Lacey and Lord Eustace Percy turned out to be rather protesters, or at least cautioners, than partakers. The body of the Conference and the

majority of the speakers evidently consisted of representatives of the various crankeries of the day — Pacifism, Pussyfootism, Birth - Control, Anti-Patriotism, Universal Education, Instruction of the Young in *tacenda*, Abolition of Capital Punishment, Abolition of Poverty, etc. etc. etc.

That they talked nonsense on these things is "not much": most conferences, as the Archbishop seems to have felt, do that; but the way they managed the nonsense they talked was rather exceptional. Take, for instance, their Anti-War declaration. After it was made, Father Woodcock, S.J., pointed out in the *Times* that this would of itself have made it impossible for *his* Church to join the movement: and some big-wigs¹ of Copec attempted to cope with him. But the difference of their methods! This "Jesuit" stated his case with perfect clearness and accuracy, argued his points with flawless logic, and drew an inevitable conclusion. His answerers answered with pleas that they hadn't "meant" this, that they hadn't

¹ Bigness, it must be remembered, is an entirely *relative* thing.

“ intended ” that, that somebody had injudiciously said something that mustn’t be taken as the mind of the Conference. One really seemed to be reading the *Provinciales*, with the parts changed by some latter-day Puck!

Perhaps the most monstrous absurdity, though an absurdity of a kind which is not very easy to handle, was the Conference’s adoption of its mysterious study-group’s assertion of “ the absolutely equal value, in the sight of God, of every human soul.” One touches such an utterance as this rather reluctantly, for it requires strong language. Whether the assertion is true or false (some persons present forcibly but vainly urged the entire absence of evidence for it), its impertinence, to use a mild but really appropriate word—its blasphemy, to speak seriously and technically—are only too apparent to all who have eyes to see, to all who have, not indeed an adequate vision—that is impossible—but the most shadowy and through-glass-on-glass-darkened idea of God Himself. *He* to be told by twelve

hundred representatives, *not* of the finest flower, of our *unintelligent intelligentsia* what things are in His sight! Why, the fool who utters what are commonly called blasphemies on a Bolshevik platform is guiltless compared with these. He is indeed doubly a fool, for he abuses what he thinks does not exist. But these—they grant, or think they grant, the existence of a Being who includes and transcends everything, and they tell Him, nominally what He does and thinks Himself, really what they choose that He shall think and do! Pray, does the folly outmatch the insolence, or the insolence the folly?

There was little that was new in the proceedings of Copec, the bigness of the assemblage of familiar utterers of priggery and quackery being the chief point about it. It reminded some of us seniors of the old Social Science Congress, at one of the meetings of which the present humble writer made his *début* as a Newspaper Correspondent. But when the discussions there turned on apparatus, it was sometimes exhibited—

I remember a sanitary enthusiast enlivening the proceedings by holding up over his head as he spoke, a complicated and very glittering tin pail. Copec seems to have abstained from imitating this.

One utterance—though it was made by a person who, if there were a revolution, might possibly think it his duty (if he also thought it worth while) to guillotine *me*, and towards whom I might have to take preventive measures—seemed to me of real weight and value. Mr. Herbert Pickles, a working weaver of Hebden Bridge, warned the Conference that in the resolutions it was about to adopt, it was "playing with social dynamite." "We shall remember them," he said, "and when the time comes we shall challenge you to carry out your words." I should like to shake hands with Mr. Herbert Pickles; and I most sincerely hope that we shall never be brought into either of the unpleasant relationships adumbrated above. "Playing with dynamite"—dynamite social, political, moral, religious—that is what the Copeckers were

—and as, I believe, they have voted themselves *en permanence*, are—doing.

The above was written so far before the Bishop of Manchester addressed, like any Pope or Emperor, a “Message” to the *Times* and the world on the subject of his recent, but not quite Œcumenical, Council. The text of this is of such a character that a mere layman does not like to handle it in detail, especially in regard to the probable or improbable presiding and guiding Personage of whom the Bishop talked so confidently. But still the most elderly of laymen may surely remind even the youngest of bishops that there is in Holy Writ authority of a strong kind, and confirmed in a most singular manner by profane history, as to the occasional presence in individuals, assemblies, and communities of a *lying* spirit—a spirit of delusion, misconduct, and ruin.¹

¹ Incidentally it may be observed that more than one or two or three of the conclusions of the Conference are in flat contradiction of the Articles of the Church of England. (*V. inf.* on them.) But of course that does not matter.

VII. *Le Temps jadis: Wallet*¹ III. '70s.—As the contents of former rescuings of however small alms *from* Oblivion were not the most unpopular items of my *Second Scrap Book*, and as I have found some more in attempts—proper to old age—to defeat the auctioneer and the second-hand catalogue-maker, I venture to select some further items before the fire, the wastepaper-baskets, or, in possible cases, the original writers, receive them. For most if not all of these come from “epistolary communications.”

Some of these—family letters, “crossed” or uncrossed messages from angels, and the like—of course escape even the most partial resurrection. But one may ask, “Does any angel ever cross, or even know how to cross, a letter now?” It can’t have “come by nature.” In some examples before me the crossing is geometrically regular, though the paper is not cross-water-lined in any

¹ For the contents of Wallets I. and II., and the origin of the appellation, see *A Second Scrap Book*. But the contents of the several “wallets” are invariably, or almost invariably, independent, and nobody need be bothered to “refer back” in order to understand.

way. People used to abuse crossing, but I think I rather like it—restricted, of course, to angelic use only.

Of more public matter, the most noticeable thing that tumbles out of the oldest wallet is a post card signed “W. W.,” in a very sprawling hand. Now this did not stand for “William Wordsworth,” seeing that the bard died when I was not five years old, and that there were then no post cards. But it did stand for Walt Whitman, notifying me that on the 30th August 1876 the two subscription volumes of his works had been despatched. Cheek by jowl with this in the wallet is a (to me at least) most amusing “commentary beforehand” in the shape of a cutting¹ from the New York *Nation* somewhere in October ’75. A contributor (rather *dolose*, I suspect) had written to that respectable periodical comparing some remarks of mine on Baudelaire with some others (not at all to the same effect) of M. Scherer’s

¹ This is the article to which, not then knowing that I still possessed its text, I referred briefly at p. 278 of *A Scrap Book*.

on the same subject, and asking which authority he should follow. The *Nation* of course had no doubt. It didn't know much about me, but what it did was very bad. "There mantle[d] already upon [my] genius the hue of a premature decrepitude." (Mercy! how it must be mantling *cinquante ans après!*) I had already praised in regard to the above-mentioned W. W. "the most spurious sounding passages in that poet's works." I had "a stringy, shrill, *emasculate* [really, Mr. or Mrs. *Nation*, how *could* you know? ¹] falsetto." After which, the individual Tim Malone's head was allowed merely to take a share in the general bludgeoning of the "neo-pagan school" at large, for their "rancid and gamey flavour," their "pretentious inanity," *et patati et patata*.

Dear! dear! and it so happened that a week or two before I wrote this Scrap, that very same Essay on Baudelaire had itself passed for press in

¹ I hope there were "no complaints," to borrow the ingenious words of Lord Derby—not the excellent holder of the title to-day, but his famous grandfather.

the third *form*—not merely the third *impression*—which it has experienced since its original decrepitude!

Most of these *épaves* of the 'seventies consist of early commissions and summonses from editors—"Songs of the Springtides" I find some of them sentimentally docketed. Here are (*v. inf.*, No. XXXVIII.) such summonses in Harwood's formal but most polite style; here a brief and obviously rather startled note from Frank Hill in the very earliest days of our connection: "Dear Mr. Saintsbury—Where did you pick up the statements on which your note about tail-bearing men is founded?" With another famous editor, Mr. Greenwood, the stars did not ordain that my conjunctions should be continuously happy. As early as November '76, when I had only just flung myself on the many-fountained but not always nutritious bosom of the Press, I find a quite warm welcome of "a very bright and clever article," which he hopes to use in the *P.M.G.* And a little later I used to review for the

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St. James's.¹ But somehow or other we never came into any close connection, either personal or literary, and in the days of the *Anti-Jacobin* he (as usual, I suppose, owing to some make-bate of an under-strapper) took offence at something in the *Saturday*, and fell foul of it and of me in consequence. Having always been of the opinion of Sir Hildebrand Osbaldistone that "All a gentleman can say is, 'Sorry for it,' " and holding that a gentleman should never hesitate to say so if he *is* sorry, I tried to placate Mr. Greenwood privately: but he did not relax his ails and his angers. However, as, later still, he made no objection to my using his "Notes on *Denis Duval*" for the "Oxford" Thackeray, I hope the *vulnus* (the exact nature of which I never fully understood) was not *insanabile*. Here too are letters from my mystery-editor (Caldwell Brown) of *London*²—decidedly more

¹ Here appeared those "Confessions of an English Leek-Eater" to which I referred in *Scrap Book I.*, p. 11.

² V. *A Scrap Book*, pp. 153-4. I had quite forgotten that in his first invitation he says "a gentleman" has told him that I had "a vein of humour of quite a peculiar sort." Who can this nice "gentleman" have

business-like than I had perhaps unjustly credited him with being.

But this "Shop" is varied by not unpleasing "House" matters, or in some cases other Shop. Among such contrasted documents are some hotel bills at the *Castle*, Richmond—a place which I always greatly preferred to the *Star and Garter*, perhaps because I never used this latter in its best days. One of these contains a puzzle or two, more especially considering its probable date, 1877-8-9. "Desert" (*sic*) is charged separately from "dinner"—a thing unusual then, I think.¹ More unusual still is the entry—after an ordinary dinner of men *and* ladies—of "Anchovy Toast, 1s." What Cyclopean appetite—not-under-graduate and by itself—for the *Castle* would certainly have argued "Two or more people, two or more shillings") could have demanded anchovy toast after dinner, "desert," sherry, burgundy,

been? It was neither Lang nor Stevenson, both of whom are mentioned separately.

¹ Not long before, however, an Oxford tailor used to charge lining, buttons, etc., all in separate items from the coat they helped to fashion.

champagne, port, claret, coffee, and liqueurs? At Oxford or at "Ambrose's" if you like, but not at Richmond. And then there is an entry for "Lights." I thought the *bougie* had disappeared from English hotel bills long before this.

The two shortest documents contrast again agreeably. The first runs:

And he said, "I wish I had a black-pudding,"
And the fairies sent him one.

They (or she) did, and he ate of it, and never wished for another, but blessed the fairy for this. The second is different—a cutting from a review of a book of travel: "We remember very well how we once took the same walk," etc. annotated in ink:

"Do you now? How very touching."

This was probably by a vengeful novelist. But in the same poke abides a very different letter from Robert Buchanan, whose work in prose and verse I had reviewed, not, I think, unfairly, if certainly

not as I might have reviewed (or *not* reviewed ¹) it had there been no "Fleshly School." But I met him not many years afterwards, and when a somewhat mischievous introducer said, "Here is one of your enemies, Mr. Buchanan," he replied, "Mr. Saintsbury has said what he thought of my books; but I hope he is no enemy of mine. I have never thought he was." And I said as we shook hands, "Most certainly not." So I hope Aramis, had he been present, would not have refused us the benefit of his immortal rebuke to Porthos: "Quant à moi, je trouve les choses que ces messieurs se disent fort bien dites et tout à fait dignes de deux gentilshommes." And the document before me is an invitation not to "Pistols for two and coffee for one," but to tea for three, the third being not a doctor, but a lady.

The last thing (or last but one) to be mentioned

¹ I had not long passed my novitiate when I came to the conclusion, from which I have never since varied, that one should decline to review the work of any one with whom one has cause of quarrel or dislike, unless one can give it thorough praise on its own merits. If the varlet's jacket wants dusting, let some one else do it.

is *by* a lady, though a different one, and contains suggestions for a garment which we were designing between us as a present for my wife. If this were an illustrated book I could transfer to its pages from the original some admirable sketches of a '75 confection of the most elegant. The description is still appetising. (At this time, the reader must remember, the crinoline was flattened in front, but retained its swell otherwise and -where.) "Front very slightly gathered (to look as if a little pulled up) by a ruche lined with darker silk. Flounce and two puffings bound or not as *you* [that's *me*] decide. Body with the new-fashioned basque and pockets, and a bow in the dark silk. Back very simple. Sleeves with ruche like the front. Please say what you would like for the neck—flat trimming or ruche?"

O *gran bontà* of those ancient times, with half-a-dozen papers competing for one's articles; and reconciliations and forgivenesses of injuries in the grand manner; and the garden of the *Castle* at Richmond down to the river after dinner,

and the planning of dresses for Some One to wear!

But, to placate Nemesis, let me append a document which shows that at one time during this decade I came under the unfavourable notice of the Police:

G. Saintsbury, Esquire,
Educational Institute,
Elgin.

POLICE OFFICE, ELGIN,
25th April 1876.

SIR—A large yellow-coloured, ferocious-looking dog from the Institute, has of late been straying about the streets of the Town—evidently without any person in charge of him—and has on more than one occasion jumped upon, and greatly frightened some of the lady passengers, and children.

I have therefore to request that you cause this brute be secured, and kept under proper control for the future, and thus save further annoyance and danger to the lieges.—
I am, sir, Your obed. Servt.,

ALEC MATTHEWS,
Supt. of Police.

It may sound rather peremptory, but the police in Scotland, at any rate there, were apt to be a

little less polite in manner than their English brethren, and indeed had (as my friend the Procurator-Fiscal of the place assured me laughing) rather a French than an English idea of their power and position. The "brute" in question was a smooth St. Bernard puppy—a very delightful beast, though certainly large, as certainly yellow-coloured, and possibly ferocious-looking to the feminine "lieges," whose sealskin jackets induced him to put his paws on their shoulders. But he meant no harm, and in fact did none.

VIII. *In pravum induresco*.—The Latinity is Quintilian's, which ought to be good enough for a critical subject; and I cannot think of a better heading for a persistence in, and a defence of, my heretical pravity as to Virgil in the *Second Scrap Book*. In the unsatisfactory modern way of scoring by "points," I could begin with a big one. I was aware as, to compare small persons with great, Mr. Fielding was on a celebrated occasion, that my enemies (who were very friendly enemies

for the most part) might "find out" that I had given them a handle by objecting elsewhere to Tennyson's detraction because of Arthur, and by myself objecting to Æneas. And when they "found it out" I was again like that great man, except that I did not, of course, use the improper expletive attributed to him on the occasion in accepting facts.

But though they "found it out, [bless] them," I do not think they can score. For in the first place I distinctly gave up the "blameless prig" to his foes' mercy, finding fault with them only on their neglect of Tennyson's really poetical merit; and in the second I did not base my rejection of Virgil's claims to be a *highest* poet—I never denied him height of a kind—on the disgustingness of his hero. So I think *I* score on *their* play.

To take the thing quite seriously, however, one must not talk thus. I knew I should startle most people, for no one who possesses even less knowledge of literary history than I believe I may claim, can be unaware of the singular strength and

still more singular duration of high estimates of Virgil from his own day to this. I doubt whether any other author can match him here. His contemporaries, though there may have been some jealous cavillers, had no doubt about him as one of their greatest, if not their greatest, absolutely and by himself. In the Decadence the rhetoricians took him up as a model and treasury of examples not merely in poetry, but for all literature. The Dark and Early Middle Ages made him a magician, and the Later Middle gave him, through Dante, such a testimonial as no other poet—not even Shakespeare—has ever received, seeing that there has been nobody except Shakespeare himself, of such quality as Dante's, to give it. By a sort of miracle the Renaissance for once did not despise what the Mediævals had valued; and when it turned into mere Neo-Classicism Virgil was just the man for it. In fact the sketch here given shows that he had Romance enough for those who sought Romance, and Classicism enough for those who sought Classicism.

And so it has continued. There may have been occasional and individual heretics (like *moi chétif*) of a fairly serious kind, and others, mere "rotters," who did it to tease and shock—but they have been exceptions. He has established himself as a sort of superstition, and superstitions *semper virent*—are always *green* as the spring is not, and as the family from which the late Sir William Harcourt took his middle name declares that it is.

And it is quite true that he has something for almost everybody. I have myself admitted¹ the "charm" of the Eclogues—I do not know a prettier thing, or a more literary one, than the Sixth, and I could say something pretty about almost all the others. If he wrote the *Copa* (and I never saw any convincing argument that he didn't) he wrote something almost perfect in its not merely rococo kind. But indeed I need not repeat what I said before as to his craftsmanship

¹ In fact "admitted" is not the right word, for it suggests reluctance, of which there is none here.

in didactic and narrative, in phrase and rhythm. What I desiderated in him was *greatestness*, magnificence, supremacy.

My letter-bag in respect of this audacity was no doubt not quite so large as that of Mr. Asquith as described by himself after the general election, when, also as described by himself (a little hastily perhaps), he was left at the bottom of the poll but at the top of the situation. But it was not inconsiderable and extremely various. Some people rent their garments; a few seemed rather inclined to rend mine, and the wearer too; others exhibited a lofty disdain. But yet others either expressed approval or admitted being "almost persuaded"; and one of the best Latinists in England wrote to me that of course you could not compare Virgil with "Job or Homer." Now it was exactly comparison with Job and Homer and the few others of their sort which I was refusing to Virgil, or deciding against him in respect of it. Indeed the mention of Job is very helpful in the matter. I had originally been considering only Western

literature, knowing no Eastern (for I have forgotten even the little Hebrew I once knew) except in translation. But if you bring in, even by the road of translation, such poets as Job and Isaiah, *what* a difference you see! Everybody knows the parallel between the *Pollio* and the greatest of Jewish poet-prophets, as well as other guesses at possible connection between them. But whether this is mere fancy or not, what a difference in *calibre* there is! in range, in "vastness," in suggestion—if not (which would be impossible) exact expression—of the illimitable and the infinite!

Somebody, in the friendliest manner possible and with plenty of unmingled praise of other things, lamented my escapade as an instance of the difficulty Englishmen find or show in appreciation of the purely *Latin* element in poetry. I daresay he was thinking, though he did not mention it, of Matthew Arnold's notorious inability to enjoy French verse, though he was so fond of French prose. But I think I can clear myself from any imputation of the kind. As to French poetry, my

sternest critic will hardly call me wanting there; as to Italian, I can claim, not indeed any Dantist scholarship, but an æsthetic appreciation of Dante second, I hope, to no one's; and, little Spanish as I know, I revel in its rhythm. As regards the mother tongue itself, I hope I may modestly refer to what I have written for this very booklet on Lucretius:¹ while there is nothing in the whole *Corpus Poetarum*, from Catullus to Claudian (except, perhaps, Silius Italicus), that I cannot read with pleasure, rising, in the case of Catullus himself and others down (in time, not rank) to Martial, to the liveliest admiration.

If I am called upon to specify one thing specially lacking in Virgil, I should say it is the Vague, which the highest poetry always keeps in existence, or close at hand, as an emanation from within or a summoned atmosphere from without. He is too neat, too complete, and so too *finite*.

¹ Of course some one may say "Oh! yes: you run down Virgil because you admire Lucretius." But I think my critical record will hold me free of this most uncritical of critical faults.

Now the greatest poetry must always have *quelque chose d'infini* in it or suggested by it. It must make you "leave off hungry." These observations perhaps may draw down on me some repetition of a reproof, also referred to elsewhere, which I never saw in the original, but only as quoted by some one who adopted it, that I indulge too much in metaphor, "the refuge of the defeated analyst." But you see that only meant that I prefer my own methods of investigation to those of my censor. As a matter of fact, I do not think analysis at all a suitable word for literary research. It is good for science, but not for art. You can't "take to pieces" any great poem or picture. If you try to do so, the process probably leads you to laying down that there must be a complete thought in a complete couplet, and that the length of a lady's nose must be such or such a fraction of the distance from her chin to her breast.¹

¹ If any one thinks this mere frivolity he has not read his Du Fresnoy. As it is a good many years since I last read mine, I may not be exact in the "coefficients of correlation," as the mental-test people say. But that art critics of the analytic school did actually adopt these measurements as

In the examples of the greatest art there is always something left, something that defeats you. Now, to come back to and finish the present operation, there is not enough that is "left" in Virgil. It should be needless to quote Marlowe's masterpiece with a somewhat novel direction here, for every one who knows it—and who does not?—can see the application. Nothing "hovers still in the restless head" of poet or of reader—neither thought nor grace nor wonder that he cannot express. All is finished—in more senses than one—admirably finished, if you like, but *finished*.

IX. *Idealism*.—It is a question whether the prostitution of beautiful words is not nearly as great and disgusting a crime as the prostitution of things and persons which and who may or may not be beautiful. It might be deemed even worse, inasmuch as its offence is more widely

criteria of beauty in the human face and form is the simplest fact. And with what a divine and innumerable laughter the actual noses and chins and breasts have greeted their calculations!

spread, and pollutes the sense and conscience of the multitude. But it is hardly a question whether such prostitution—and the attendant lower depth still of living on it, after the fashion of the *souteneur*—has ever been so common as at the present day. It is indeed very hard for a politician in a democratic age not to be guilty of it. But it may again be questioned whether there is, in the deplorable condition indicated, a whiter slave, or a worse-enslaved and befouled white creature, than the word which stands at the head of this Scrap. “Imagination” preceded it in this martyrdom. I may have mentioned already, in these little records and comments, that a Dissenting minister of some position once accused my humble self, in the *Times*, of lacking imagination, because I objected to his co-sectarians despoiling the Church in Wales.¹ But latterly Imagination has been to some extent relieved of her loathsome or

¹ The last and funniest absurdity of this kind that I saw was the statement that, with sufficient imagination, Englishmen could get on with Swaraj, and *vice versa*. With the writer’s imagination, perhaps.

foolish employments—one can't exactly say duties—and Idealism has been forced into her place. Why, people even apologise for the late President Wilson on the plea of his having been “*such* an idealist.” And when our Labour Ministers propose to substitute copies of the New Testament, a little garbled and wholly misunderstood, for soldiers, sailors, guns, and ships; or to educate everybody at somebody else's expense; or to build houses for the million by “transferring” the expense out of the pocket of God knows who—it is all Idealism.

Let it be pointed out that the *descensus Averni*, in the case of the gracious and adorable creature thus outraged and violated, was opened by putting the -ism on to her. Hobbes may have been wrong in scorning “-nesses and -tudes and -ties.” I think he was; but “-isms” are still more easily corruptible things. “Idea” itself got, not exactly prostituted but, vulgarised long ago, and is now used on one side as merely=“notion,” on the other as specially meaning “crotchet.” But

between them "the Ideal" still holds, or should hold, something of its glorious and undefiled position. The True Ideal is something like the True Romance; indeed they are practically two names for the same divine entity or emanation. It can elevate and purify almost every—perhaps every—human thought, action, relation. Without it everything is dull and almost vile; with it things otherwise imperfect somehow share its perfection, so that finite Sensuousness becomes infinite Passion, and mere Curiosity the accomplished sense of Art. In fact the Divine *is* the Ideal and the Ideal *is* the Divine; in saying which all is said, and must be said at any risk of being oneself charged with -isms—Panthe- or Potthe- as you like.

As for that most unblessed word Idealism¹ itself, one sometimes wonders whether it has any meaning at all in the general mouth. On one day (March 5) in this year it was used by Lord Thomson—a new Labour peer and Minister—as

¹ The only thing to be said for it is that it has (as admitted above) to a certain degree shielded "The Ideal" itself.

the opposite to "an appeal to armed force," and by Mr. Lloyd George as a characteristic of "the war," which *was* an appeal to armed force, one supposes. It is something that you think nice, something that you claim for yourself, and especially something that you refuse to your opponents. There was the idealism of the "Conshy"—a very practical kind, combining itself with, or cloaking itself over, a ruthless determination to preserve one's own precious (some rude people said "dirty") skin. There is the idealism of the Trade Union leader, who is ready to starve the country into giving his followers more money. There is the idealism of the high-souled proletary, who will not stoop to the workhouse, but has not the smallest objection to the dole. There is the idealism of the League of Nations—excellently illustrated in its attitude to a certain little difference between Italy and Greece. One leapt at a letter in the *Times* headed "The *New* Idealism," hoping for a real definition. But the title proved to be, as in some Papal Bulls and other mediæval

documents, merely taken from early words in the text, which text, signed by some prominent Dissenting ministers and one or two of our freakiest Bishops, simply solicited subscriptions to the Christian Evidence Society—a capital title; whether it is an equally capital thing the names themselves are not fully evidential.

So one comes back from one's quest with a great mushroom on the wick of one's lamp, and odours by no means like those of sanctity, and a sore need for fresh oil. Nor, if any one sets out on fresh exploration of Idealism in the realms of art and literature, will he be much happier. If you see or read anything particularly ugly and very specially unlike anything in nature, you are sure to be told that it may appear so to *you*, but that it expresses the artist's bold and faithful adherence to his own idealism. This used, not long ago, to be called "realism," but they have now "changed the drink on us" and call it the other thing. There is at least the excuse that it certainly was never real.

But, when I had originally written the first draft of this Scrap thus far, my friend Sir Martin Conway, in a letter to the *Times* of March 6, recalled my attention to idealism in politics. "Labour," he said, "has an ideal": present Conservatism, it would appear, has none. Now I never was very fond of the *word* Conservative, which was only adopted when people were shying at the proper name—Tory. But, after all, the *thing* Conservatism is sound and ideal enough. We wish to keep and guard England as the freest and greatest *Imperium* in the world—that is Idea and Ideal and Idealism enough surely. As for the ideal of Labour I do not know what Sir Martin takes it to be, but I know what it is—as confessed in the words of Labour leaders and exhibited in their actions. It is the progressive diminution of work, and the progressive increase of profit, by a single class at the expense, if not, indeed, by the destruction, of other classes. A very inspiring motive—I had rather not prostitute the word ideal myself—no doubt. But, in the first place,

where are *we* to find any like it, and would we take any like it if we could?

Many things followed this hand-grenade of Sir Martin's. Another still older friend of mine, Sir Henry Craik, to my great delight, suggested that the less we throw about big loose words like these the better. Lord Astor, adding perhaps the last to date, and certainly not the least comic in a certain way, of the variations on "Nothing like leather," maintained that the only way of keeping Conservatism full up with idealist steam was to deprive people of what they like to drink in any place where they can't get a majority to give it them. And so on and so on. But this discussion glided off into one at once less abstract and more concrete as to the nature of Conservatism itself, which is treated elsewhere.¹ Here it may be enough to join Sir Henry Craik and other good men in saying, "Talk about Idealism less: follow it more."

¹ *V. inf.* the Scraps on "Conservatism" and "Liberalism," to which this is a kind of preface.

X. *Twin Cameos II.: Two Schoolmasters.*—

Every year, as I read the questionable sense talked by no small proportion of the schoolmasters and schoolmistresses who meet about Christmas-time, I thank the goodness and the grace which saved me from subjection in my youth, from colleagueship in my early manhood, to and with persons suffering in this fashion. This kind of talk—at least this form of opportunity for it—was, I think, unknown in my school-days at King's College School: my chief at Elizabeth College, Guernsey, came in, I believe, for some of it. But I venture to be sure that *he* did not talk nonsense, and I am nearly sure that he held no very different opinion of the meetings from mine.

I remember the late Mr. Frederic Harrison—when we were sitting side by side at a Mansion House dinner given by Sir William Treloar during his Mayoralty to old, in our cases very old, K.C.S. boys—speaking rather slightly of Dr. Major's (our old headmaster's) scholarship. I think this was unjust. It was no doubt not

of the modern type in some ways, and specially destitute of that attention to archæology, and *Realien* generally, which was coming in strongly at Oxford in Mr. Harrison's undergraduate days. But in the strict verbal kind, for which Cambridge has always been famous, I do not think it was at all wanting; and if some of us (myself, I fear, included) did not do justice in this respect to his teaching, it was due, not to any fault in that teaching itself, but to a certain slackness in administration for which he was not wholly, if he was at all, to blame. Boys of any brains who did well in lower forms were allowed promotion into the Upper Sixth much too soon. For my own part I spent by far the greater part of my time there, passing through the Upper Fourth, Fifth, and Lower Sixth as rapidly as possible. In this last a double sojourn *was* obligatory; but the obligation should have been extended in the other cases.¹

¹ The three masters of these forms were all men of unusual ability. Cockayne of the Fourth—ill-fated and, I have sometimes been told, ill-treated afterwards—was not only what was very rare at that time, an Anglo-

Putting this aside, Dr. Major was a very delightful and, from some points of view at all events, a very excellent schoolmaster. That he was a very old friend of my father's did not, I think, make any difference in the relations between us; indeed, in a day-school, there was not much room for personal relations of any kind until modern ideas made "Can't you let him alone" anathema, and the schoolmaster a sort of worse than Jesuit meddler. His room opened directly out of ours, but, except in school hours, or in the very rare cases of a disturbance between them, he never came into ours, though he was always at your service to answer questions. Young as some of us were, there was an atmosphere of behaviour which must have been of his creation in the many years he had held the post. Once, I remember, some fool or cad, or both, put a pistol-cartridge in

Saxon scholar, but a person of exceptional brains; Dasent of the Fifth was a really "elegant" humanist; and Heywood of the Lower Sixth—noted outside as an early collector of Méryon—was an all-round man of culture, with one of the sharpest tongues I ever came across.

the fire; but this was entirely contrary to the feelings and customs of the commons of Bradwardine. Dr. Major—who had very much of the old-fashioned leonine countenance shared by Victor Hugo and by my predecessor at Edinburgh, Professor Masson—was interested in many literatures, from English to Hebrew. He had, I think, edited Milton and Addison and Chesterfield for school purposes: and nothing pleased him better than when a Sixth Form boy, who had been a prize-winner in French or German (it was not allowed before), would condescend to come on him for the “ancientest” language, in the hours usually devoted to the modern. Whether the curious licence of translating Greek and Latin verse at examinations into English verse, if you could and chose to do so, was altogether good, I dare not say—it certainly covered slipshod rendering¹

¹ For instance, I cannot think that I myself was justified in paraphrasing the *cruda viridisque senectus* passage (Virgil’s original, not Tacitus’s quotation):

“ Yet superannuated was he not,
His veins with *quasi*-vigour still were hot.”

—but I am sure it was not altogether bad. And the insistence on the old practice of learning by heart up to the close of school-days was, I am sure, wholly good. For Humanism of the older kind I have always cherished the Doctor's memory; I am sure that he managed somehow to diffuse a sense of literature among us, and his own manners were certainly not ferocious—perhaps, indeed, they were a little too mild.

The Rev. John Oates, Headmaster of Elizabeth College, Guernsey, when I went there in 1868 as Classical Master, was of course a very much younger man than Dr. Major; in fact, I suppose he represented, pretty fairly, the generation between the Doctor's and my own. He was an Oxford man of Lincoln College, but his friendship with Mark Pattison was, I think, independent of collegiate connection, for they were both Yorkshiremen and, if I do not mistake, “knew each other at home.” Two more different persons it would be difficult for a novelist to

devise; it was almost a case of *Jean-qui-pleure* and *Jean-qui-rit*. Oates was by no means a specimen of the unparsonic schoolmaster-parson who helped to bring about the present (as it seems to me) very unhealthy divorce between the two professions. Indeed he had taken upon himself the incumbency of a chapel-of-ease in St. Peter Port; and his sermons were never below a good average, sometimes much above it. He also encouraged the then new endeavours at the higher education of women, and lectured "outside" to ladies in English Literature and (I think, but am not sure) Classics, in a scheme where, by his recommendation, I took History and Logic.¹ He wrote little or nothing, which was a pity, for he had excellent style and real critical faculty;² but outside the

¹ Lecturing to girls of any brains on Logic is great fun. It is so entirely new to them that they fasten on it eagerly. Whether it has any influence on their future lives and conversations I cannot say; but it does not spoil their dancing.

² Long after I had left Guernsey, and after he himself had taken a living in Buckinghamshire, he wrote me a letter (taking friendly objection to some views of mine on Milton's prose style), which was a really first-rate "animadversion"; and his literary talk was always good.

employments mentioned above he was rather a lazy man.

Some fault, I believe, was found with him on this last score even as a schoolmaster, but, I think, unjustly. We certainly did very fairly at the Universities, in the Civil Service examinations, and so forth. We used to have one examiner from Oxford and one from Cambridge every year; and on one occasion the late Mr. Charles Neate, who was a good scholar, if not so good a politician, paid us an elaborate compliment on the unusually good English of our men's or boys' work. The tone of the school was good too. But the point that I wish to bring out here is Oates's representation of a type of schoolmaster as different from the purely scholastic, which Dr. Major still represented, as from the modern busy-body who runs about to Congresses and talks, and who sometimes, I am told, merely " administers " and does not " teach " at all, except in the fashion of " making the school a little world," encouraging " civics," " prompting " boys to " think " about

Demogorgon knows what, and all the rest of the rubbish.

As I have said, Oates taught, preached, and lectured as much as any reasonable person could desire. But in the intervals he was a thoroughly sociable and a most hospitable¹ man; there was even a touch of the old French *abbé* about him, and if not possessed of any extraordinary humour or wit, he had a great deal more of both in a light, easy way than most of his fellows. I remember one occasion when we were walking together on the right horn of the quay-piers which enclose St. Peter Port harbour and, in this case, connect Castle Cornet with the mainland. We had been looking at some of the beautiful yachts which frequented the port during the summer, and I, with my even then rather purblind sight, had asked him whether the largest had not an auxiliary screw—an arrangement coming in then, but not

¹ He could hardly be more hospitable than Dr. Major, whose entertainments, almost to all and sundry, at school festivals must, at any rate at one time, have made considerable inroads on his, I believe, not very liberal salary.

very common. Just at that moment the Governor's carriage passed, and of course we both bowed. But Her Majesty's representative at that time permitted his wife to be drawn by one of the most curious pairs of Rosinantes that I ever saw. When they had passed sufficiently Oates looked up (I was the *excelsior* or "taller man" of the two) and murmured, "Auxiliary screws?"

"Not very brilliant?" Of course. "Quite Victorian?" Possibly. But somehow or other I cannot imagine the persons who towards Yule talk in the fashion referred to above, cocking their eyes, as the vulgar call it, and saying with delicate, not obstinate, questioning, "Auxiliary screws?"

Well, perhaps their Governing Bodies would sack them if they did.¹

¹ I should particularly like to have heard each of these subjects of mine speak of the present crotchet of "Mental Tests" for children (*V. inf.* Scrap XXXVI.). And I wish some artist would draw me, not in the present exaggerated style of caricature, but in the older fashion, two members of a "Psychological Staff" meeting each other after the fashion of the immortal pair of *haruspices*.

XI. *Name-spelling*.—If the pestilent folk who call themselves Spelling Reformers or Simplifiers ever thought of the *beauty* of words—which, I believe, they honestly profess either to know nothing about or to disregard entirely—it would be worth while offering them a *crux* or two in the department of proper names. As it is, the following remarks, of course founded on *personal* æsthesis, are not for them. But these remarks would be worthless if they were not so founded; and everybody can substitute his own sensations, which will assuredly illustrate the same general pervading mystery.¹

Perhaps the most mysterious of all its phases is the varying effect of the added *e*. “Ann,” for instance, is *to me* (I insert this once for all) one of the ugliest of all actual or possible names; “Anne,”

¹ If any one says, “Why women’s names only?” I should say that men’s names *in English* seem rarely or never to aim at beauty, though their continental forms may have some. “Eustace” is rather beautiful, and I like Christopher and Julian—in all three cases not merely because of the beautiful legends attached to them—but John, James, George, Charles, William, Richard, Robert, and the rest are just useful handles, good for fighting and counselling, no doubt, but that is all.

if not one of the absolutely prettiest, is pretty enough in all conscience.¹ On the other hand, if I ever asked "Maude" to come into the garden, it would be on the understanding that, for this occasion and for me, she left her *e* behind her. And this, to stop an obvious though trivial objection, has nothing whatever to do with personal likings or dislikings of the persons so named. I don't think I ever knew an "Ann"—the less feminine form (though Thackeray rather liked it) had gone out before my time—to like or dislike, and I have both liked and disliked Annes. Nor have I ever disliked a Maude. The words are—though I admit that some of those mentioned or to be mentioned carry an idealised appearance and character with them—beautiful or not beautiful words *in themselves*.

Not less difficult to account for are the variations of the diminutives *-y* or *-ie*. Perhaps it was

¹ Anna, the third form, despite its ancient associations, always seems to me, as a modern name, unreal, generally suggesting, though I have known several live Annas, a prize poem on Queen Anne.

because Thackeray liked "Ann" that he liked "Anny," which seems to me frankly hideous, while "Annie" is quite pretty. The same thing happens with "Sophy" and "Sophie," though here the unhappy rationalist may perhaps find something of a clue to get him out of the maze he hates so. (I own I rather like mazes, especially with an agreeable companion, an absence of the superfluous person who inspects and directs from above, and not too near dinner-time.) For let us compare on the opposite side our "Sally" and "Fanny" with the American "Sallie" and "Fannie." Here the *y* forms suit an English taste, at least, far better than the *ie*'s. The comparison suggests that in some cases at least (Annie is an exception here) French analogies come in. Sophie *is* French, while there are perhaps no two more *un*-French appellations in this Appendix to the Dictionary than Sally and Fanny.¹ You can't

¹ "Bertha" is much better than Davenant's "Birtha," but is herself best as the Latin and Italian "*Berta*," without the *h*. So also the French "Berthe" is a mere article of clothing, but "Berte" brings all the charms of romance with her.

imagine a French girl being called by them except as a freak (M. Feydeau couldn't demur *here*). But "Lucy" and "Lucie" are almost equally admirable, and though "Mary" ought not, from some points of view, to be interfered with, "Marie" is not objectionable from others.

Also these two last names, with their strangely associated charms of æsthetic sound and familiar character, illustrate the drift of this paper super-excellently, in that they possess a third sister, with the smallest possible alteration-addition of spelling, which is possibly the ugliest of all. Why "Maria" is so ugly I cannot make out. The vulgarism "Marier" or "Marire," which phoneticians and spelling reformers, I believe, regard as quite proper, may have something to do with it, but not everything. Personalities, once more, have, in my case, absolutely nothing to do with it. I have liked several Marias, in life and literature, by no means out of mere compassion for their ghastly lot. But why?

Another mystery exists in connection with a

great name historically and customarily connected with Mary. "Elizabeth" or "Elisabeth" (you may take your choice, without paying any money, between *z* and *s*), if not exactly a pretty or beautiful name, is a very handsome one, and of curiously wide association. Its more common and pet diminutions, Bess, Bessy, or *ie* (both will do here), Liz, Lizzy, or *ie*, even Lisbeth and Elspeth and Elsie certainly (if allowed) are all agreeable. But by simply cutting off the -beth you make two of the ugliest names in or out of Christendom. "Beth" is bad enough, and fortunately rare in England; but "Eliza"! Except to point out that it runs in a curricule with Maria, and designates ideally rather the same sort of person, one had better not reason of it and not look at it. Looked at, it is rather worse than Maria itself.¹

¹ If anybody asks, "How *could* Charlotte Lucas marry Mr. Collins?" it is sufficient to say—Because she could call Elizabeth Bennet "Eliza." By the way, compare "Charlotte" itself with "Sharlot"—the form it takes in, I think, one of Steele's plays, Dick's anti-Jacobitism being perhaps the cause. The first, if not beautiful, is quite pretty; the second, a phonetic triumph, is appallingly hideous and painfully suggestive.

The three most beautiful of all names—Helen, Margaret, and Isabel—in the first two cases illustrate rather the variety of orthography than its sudden and rather unintelligible possibilities of degradation.¹ You *can't* spoil "Helen," though that form of her remains the best: and the unusual number of extensions and alterations—Helena, Elena, Ellen, Elinor, Hellenore, Eleanor, Eleanore, or -nora, even Nell and Nelly—retain in different degrees the magic of the original, though some of them reflect less, and some more, of that aspect of it which "brought calamity." Margaret has even more varieties, and there being no tragedy originally here (for, if you are martyred at the end, walking on the Dragon is a large "one to you" beforehand) most of them are rather cheerful, and the cheerfulest escape vulgarity. Peg and Peggy, Meg, Maggie (observe the old

¹ These are terrible. I once knew a really angelic holder of the pretty and not common name of "Emmeline," with all its memories not merely of Wordsworth, but of Purcell's music and Dryden's verse, who was wicked enough to spell it "*Emilin*" as if she were a recently invented alkaloid! For even angels are wicked sometimes, as was well seen long ago.

difference, for *Peggie* would be objectionable, and *Maggy* is, even without *Little Dorrit* associations, absurd), and *Madge*, all have an "O-let-us-be-joyful" air. *Marjory* (here *y* and *ie* run a dead heat) is excellent, and *Margery* not bad. "Margret," without the *a*, loses something more than that letter perhaps, but is again not bad; and even when we get down to the "*speciosa Magota*" of the Goliardists, and its closest suggestion of the impudent but agreeable bird which usurps the name, the charm has not gone. Hardly more than one form—*Margaretta*—is a failure, and there is more curiosity about that.¹

For the third beautifulest name—*Isabel*—also loses much of its beauty if you add a parallel syllable and make it *Isabella*. This has not, indeed, the rather theatrical air of *Margaretta*, but it calls almost as loudly for the shears. In fact you must let *Isabel* alone, with *Jezebel*—which is

¹ Since I wrote this I see that one of the best two-year-old fillies of the year bears the odd but not ugly extension-form "*Margeritta*," which somehow escapes the doom of its sister.

really a very pretty name in itself, and the original bearer of which has, I think, been much ill-treated—for a variant of playful affection. The Scotch, I regret to say, play tricks with it. One or two of these, which I could have mentioned in *Scrap Book II.*, the course of time has barred from comment, lest I should be accused of political ill-manners—the very worst kind of the very worst thing in the world. But Isobel is certainly a degradation, though it introduces a curious problem-instance of the connection of spelling and pronouncing.¹ I never heard any person of education and breeding pronounce the *i* in “Isabel” long or that in “Isobel” short, and this in turn keys on to the funny “tempest in a teacup” about “isolate” which arose in the spring of this year.² I must own again that, until

¹ This “connection” is a ticklish business. Mistakes about it are the main cause of the “Spelling Reform” nuisance. But it may be laid down peremptorily that pronunciation has to do with the ear, spelling with the eye first and foremost, if not all the way.

² Funny as it was, it was perhaps an ill one in which to interpose. But it did occur to me that the shortening of the *i* was possibly an Irish habit. After having all my life supposed that the Irish synonym for porridge was

this tempest arose, I was not aware that, as above, "any person of education and breeding" ever pronounced this verb as "issolate." But apparently some persons, undoubtedly to be so described, do, and perhaps they also say "Issobel." As for the *-la*, observe that "*Amabel*" also won't stand the *-la*, but "*Annabel*"¹ will, and *Aldabella* cut short is unthinkable.

In respect of the feminine names which are distinctly feminines of masculines I have always had a doubt. Girls, except in rare cases, are so entirely different from boys, and women (though less entirely) from men, that this mere, as it were, grammatical approximation is unsatisfactory. Georgina or Georgiana is, as the Princess's rather too didactic lover justly told her in more general context, *not* merely "an undeveloped George" and should not be named derivatively. The

pronounced "stir-about" (=stür), I was informed by an Irish lady that it was never called in its native land anything but "stirrabout," with the short *i* like "squirrel."

¹ The old Scotch corruption of this into "*Annapple*" shows how spelling can spoil beauty as well as make it.

process of so naming her was a forerunner, if unconsciously so, of giving her votes and M.P.-ships and enabling her to anticipate the foreman in stating the verdict of juries. Nevertheless some of the *-anas* and *-ettas* and *-inas*¹ are beautiful from our present point of view. The unapproachable ugliness of "*Jamesina*" is compensated by not a few successes, and Henrietta is at least pretty. But an interesting point in the present enquiry is the difference of pronunciation (French or English *i*) in the *ine* and *ina* forms. Caroline has always, I think, taken the long *i*, and the Americans, I suppose, mean this by writing *Carolyn*. But Geraldine has, with the same proviso, always been *een*, and Thomasine and Jacqueline and others. This last has a pleasing "*etta*" variant, and with those two available, if you must have a feminine for James (*Jemima* is

¹ It is curious that the best of the *-anas* have nothing to do with men's names. *Gloriana* and *Oriana* are much better than *Juliana*. What, by the way, was the origin of that curious name of the Harleys'—*Brilliana*? I rather think it must be from a "heroic" romance, the termination being a favourite one there.

not that, I need hardly say, though some do falsely think so), why you should, as above noted, indulge in such a hideous and horrible hybrid as Jamesina (Jacobina would be tolerable if not lovely), only those who know that there is no horror of bad taste of which humanity is not capable can understand. Catherine—which, of course, is not one of the feminised names at all, and *is* one of the beautiful if not beautifullest—keeps its beauty, or at least good looks, in every form. Katharine (who is quite a different *person* from Catherine), Kate, Katie, Kitty, even “Cattern” and “Cat” are all acceptable. Dorothy is another unspoilable. From Dorothea and its countertwist Theodora, through Dora (whom neither Tennyson nor the war itself could spoil in “the abstract”) and Dolly and Doll, it is in different applicabilities delightful. And the same is true of “Alice” and “Alicia.” The Elizabethans, for once, spoilt beauty in making the form “Alce,” though this was probably only a vulgarism.

This study might be extended indefinitely,

especially if one took in foreign forms. For instance, "Adelaide," a stately but not particularly attractive name (except for musical or personal associations), becomes pure witchery in "Azalais," while none of the foreign equivalents of "Guenevere" is worthy of her. But enough probably, possibly too much.¹

XII. *Reunion*.—The curious decay of Satire at the present time has been, I think, if not very frequently or elaborately, noticed by critics. Their successors, sometime hence, will no doubt dwell more upon it, and combine with their dwelling insistence on the remarkable abundance of subjects which our satirists had to avail themselves of, if they had existed. Female suffrage, daylight saving, the League of Nations, the permitted existence of bodies which can threaten

¹ The flower-names need hardly any comment. Of the forms of the two chief, "Rose" is certainly better than "Rosa," though all the compounds of the latter are good, from "Rosalind" downwards. "Lily," "Lilian," and "Lilias" are all pretty, though you may spoil them by doubling the middle *l*. "Violet" comes next and then "Daisy." Some of the others are rather affected in one sense, but hardly any are affected by spelling.

with impunity, and at least begin to carry out, the starvation and in other ways molestation of the nation at large—many other twentieth-centuryisms would have been manna to Aristophanes or Juvenal, Swift, Canning, or my friend Mr. Traill, whose death in 1900 may possibly strike the imaginative historian of the future (we can't *continue* Dryasdusts) as interesting. And what a joy their fructifications thereon would have been to past, present, and future ages!

But at the moment—and alas! with how much *tenuiore penna* than those just glanced at, yet hoping to combine decency with some slight stricture on magnates—I propose to confine myself to the singular disturbances recently made and discussed about “ Reunion ” of the various Christian churches which can undoubtedly (from any impartial and instructed point of view) claim the name of Church, and of those bodies which would fain be in it, but perhaps would be more wise to content themselves with the ingenious, time-justified if not-honoured, and uncontroversial

name of "Denominations," though unkind voices call them "Sects." Far be it from me to enter into the lists about "Malines," though I adore Mechlin lace, and though, when I saw the Cathedral more than fifty years ago, I ceased to wonder why that lace was so good. The weary jangle of "Protestant" and "Catholic," in which about 90 per cent of the janglers on both sides seem not to know what either of the names denotes or connotes, shall have no place here at least, though elsewhere we may have to touch it "with gloves" (gloves have several senses).

My point—I should not presume to say of satire, but of slightly humorous surprise—is this, "Why should any member of the Church of England, much more any such Commander-in-Chief of it, hitherto renowned for almost Fabian caution, as the present Archbishop of Canterbury, tread on such guileful and unnecessary ashes, handle such a prickly and superfluous porcupine, drink such bitter and unhealing waters, swallow such a Bel-and-the-Dragon bolus, as in all these

parallels and metaphors is or are represented by the word " Reunion " ? Surely to be *alterius orbis Papa*, and that a world far greater and nobler than his not too fraternal brother's, might be a thing great enough to hold and too great to surrender !

What do we want with Reunion ? What could it give us ? And for practical folk who do not wish to hurry God about the millennium, who are quite contented with the narrow seas, and only do not wish them wider because that would be quarrelling with actual divine arrangements—what reasonable hope can there be of bringing it about without serious mischief of one sort or another, nay, of bringing it about *at all* ? But the first two questions are the most important.

" What *do* we want with Reunion ? and what *could* it give us ? " I am unable, as a person fairly well acquainted with history and not quite ignorant of theology, to discover anything that it could give us except, possibly but improbably, a cessation of the amiable discomfort felt by some persons at the fact of *Non-Union*, and of the un-

amiable and decidedly un-Christian animosity entertained by others towards members of other churches and sects. But the discomfort, as I may endeavour to point out, is rather amiable than reasonable; and the animosity is quite sufficiently forbidden by Christianity itself already to make inefficacious any plastering of it over, by a camouflage of peace where there is no peace.

What—to make up the three times necessary for truth according to a great authority—do *we* want with Reunion, we members of the Church of England, who have the Apostolic Succession (the *Nag* can scarcely put in its *Head* again like the Camel in *Le Diable Amoureux*); who have Baptismal Regeneration and the Presence as Christ Himself pronounced it in the Eucharist; who hold the Three Creeds and the Scriptures as reference-books to support and supplement them? Why do *we* require an allowance from Rome, which all rational men must know she never will give us without surrender on our part,—a reinforcing and remustering from deserters as they

may be harshly, lapsed or merely *unmustered* members as they may be charitably, denominated? These latter can return at any time they choose, as not a few of them, even of their ministers, from time to time do.¹ As for the Romans, there is a good deal more to say. I cannot, for the life of me, understand how anybody can bring himself—as some persons have done whom I respect and, to no small extent, agree with in other points—to ask Roman opinion on our Ordinals, our Liturgy, etc. In the first place the answer is, as above said, predestined; in the second place it is entirely irrelevant and valueless, even as would be our opinion² on the doctrines and ceremonies of any Church out of England or the English empire.

To ask the Church of Rome to “reunite” is simply to ask the impossible. She need not do it; she cannot do it; and in my frank opinion she ought not to do it. She need not do it, because

¹ In fact, no “return” is necessary, for every born Englishman is born a member of the Church of England, and has but to “take up” his birthright.

² If anybody says, “But we *do* give such an opinion in our Articles,” I must refer him to the Scrap below on these.

we are already perfectly provided with everything she could give us. She cannot do it, because of the position of the Pope, in which, I think, no less a person than Lord Hugh Cecil finds a hopeless obstacle. And she ought not to do it, for the same reason that she need not—to wit, that as we want nothing from her, so we have nothing to give to her. She has all the necessaries above enumerated; if she has chosen to add to them what we think *unnecessaries* certainly, and perhaps a little worse sometimes, she can only relinquish these by acknowledging herself hopelessly wrong for centuries. And her breath, her blood, her life, is the doctrine that she is never wrong.

On the other hand, look at the ill-feeling, the waste of time in idle discussion and recrimination, that this Reunion business has brought about! It has given, I fear, just cause to the Romans to giggle in some cases and to “pontify” (like Cardinal Bourne) in others; to the Dissenters to give themselves airs. It has infuriated or encouraged our own foolisher folk on both sides.

It is in direct contravention to the glorious Tractarian motto, "In quietness and confidence shall be your strength." (Please do not think that I am ignorant of the *Eirenicon*.) And it is not, nor can it come to, good,

so long

As till God's great *Venite* change the song

from its present discords into perfect unison.

XIII. *Accused Evidence*.—It is no small salve to a tender conscience—supposing such a thing possible in a *plusquam*-septuagenarian Tory schoolmaster, journalist, and professor—to find a judge endorsing the opinions which the fossil used to enforce, or try to enforce, in dealing with a legal question, on the strength of such brains and knowledge as the Almighty had vouchsafed him, fortified by six dinners in the Inner Temple Hall and a fair amount of initial caution-money and annual thirteen and fourpences.¹

¹ After all, in those happy days, I could (as mentioned, I think, in our First) have been called at any time, without examinations or any such frivolities, by eating six more dinners, and paying a hundred guineas to a friend.

The judge was Mr. Justice Rowlatt, acting as Chairman, and the subject was the admission of accused persons to give evidence. Of the many not exactly sensible things, outside mere politics, which recent times have seen, this has always seemed to me a fair candidate for top marks. Naturally Mr. Justice Rowlatt did not express himself in such terms as these; but I think his own intimation that he did not think the innovation had affected the course of justice at all, and was pretty certain that it had not affected that course beneficially, may be not improperly paraphrased, in lay plain speaking, as above. Or as one may less flippantly retranslate it, "Almost certainly inoperative and quite certainly not beneficial," is a pretty comment on a "reform" of not so very few years' standing. That the Judge added a suggestion to the effect that this reform had probably increased the amount of perjury—a sporting amusement quite prevalent enough in our law-courts already—is serious, but rather outside the present purpose. All our law

reforms, the divorce ones especially, seem to have a knack of importing the old Welsh and Irish licence of swearing "in a general way, anythink" into England. Besides, it was a certainty beforehand. Every guilty accused person who asked to give evidence would perjure himself as a matter of course. And an innocent one would be very likely to do so in mere flurry and anxiety.

I think, however, that when I used to argue against the practice I did not lay much stress on this result, *because* it was so obvious. The strongest argument always was, and still is, the inevitable prejudice created against the accused person who does *not* give evidence. It is useless to say that this prejudice is formally barred. You *can't* bar it, unless you change human nature. I doubt whether even the superhuman asceticism which hedges a judge—keeping him from knowing what bridge is, and saving him from all contact with the contents of the daily press—always avails to keep this prejudice out. And I am perfectly certain that a varying but always present propor-

tion of the jury (especially since it was determined that, in that questionable Paradise, it was not good for man to be alone) does not attempt to keep it out.

But this is only the strongest of many strong arguments against, while I have never been able to perceive strength in any argument for, except in one which, no doubt, looks and sounds strong, but is really of the weakest—that of “fairness.” “Not give a man a hearing in his own case and cause?” “Shut the poor fellow’s mouth?” “Gag him?” “Shameful!” Pretty this, but very, *very* slim. For it entirely neglects the institution of counsel, whose reason for existence is to put the poor fellow’s case for him in the best manner possible, and who are free from all the disabilities more or less certain to affect a self-excuser.¹

¹ It is rather interesting to compare on this subject the remarks of Sheriff and Clerk-of-Session Sir Walter Scott on the Scottish practice of “Declaration” by accused persons. They will be found in *The Heart of Midlothian* when he comes to the trial of Effie Deans, and are—for a Scot speaking of things Scottish—very decidedly unfavourable. A corresponding admission, by the way, is made in character by Bailie Littlejohn in *The Antiquary*.

XIV. *Labor Omnia? Vincit.*—Whether 1924 has been, or is to be yet, distinguished among bissextiles for the exercise of its supposed special opportunity nobody can, now or ever, say. Indeed there are wicked persons who declare that “proposals” the reverse way are by no means so exceptional in the other three years of each quaternion as is taken for granted, while a still less inconsiderable number of marriages—and those not the unluckiest—probably take place with no definite “popping” (as Miss Anne Prettyman would say, to the just annoyance of her sister) or counter-popping at all, till question and reply are made before the altar.

But leap-years have also, in a vague sort of way, been taken as likely times for the occurrence of other out-of-the-way things; and certainly this justifies the taking as well as any other that the present observer can recall, except 1848 (his first, as this is very probably his last), when his observing faculties for politics, literature, and so forth, were not quite in full play. So let us note a few.

The Pope has made it a Holy Year; it has had the biggest exhibition ever known at Wembley, and almost the vilest weather ever known in England; a Lord Derby has won the race called after his ancestors and himself; and Labour has at last come into—well, into Downing Street. Let us look at this last wonderful wonder of wonders a little.

It was natural that both the Labour party and other people should go a little astray about the immediate consequences of their slipping into some real and more nominal power as a minority Government. The primmest squares admit the least reputable and most ferocious-looking dogs when led by a string; and though the string was in this case a double lead, held by two persons, one of whom was not altogether trustworthy, there was not much danger of immediate serious harm being done. It was annoying, doubtless, to *les bien-pensants*, but as the “good thinkers,” the “beautiful and good,” are sometimes (alas! not always) men of humour as well, the humorous

side soon got upwards, presented now by the tolerated Government itself, now by the Liberal party, and now by miscellaneous folk.

The first and the last were jointly responsible for one very funny thing or set of things—the wonder expressed again and again that Labour Ministers should get on well with His Majesty. Now a gentleman does not, as a rule, behave otherwise than *as* a gentleman to persons officially brought to his notice. And though George the Fourth's claims to be a gentleman have sometimes been unkindly challenged, I do not remember that even lunatics have ever disputed those of George the Fifth.

Then the expected amusement, from the effects of office on different but undisciplined temperaments, has been more than expectedly provided. A Scotsman, engaged in actual business, rarely makes a fool of himself unless he is an actual imbecile; and what is the matter with Mr. Ramsay Macdonald is not exactly imbecility. It was certain that some new Ministers would make

the mistake of thinking that they were Dictators or Deputy-Dictators in their own departments, and they did so; that they might ignore collective responsibility, and they did so. It was particularly pleasant to find Mr. Snowden, consciously (to suit those behind him who love not Latin quotations) or unconsciously, translating Coleridge's *Intelligenda affero, non intellectum* for the benefit of Mr. Masterman, of all people in the world. It was, of course, fun to see the wild men of the party "exposing their *cui bono*" to the fullest possible extent. And it was edifying to find peers "from Blankleys" as ready to occupy vacant seats at a Cabinet-table as in former days at a dinner one.

True, this kind of laughter leaves rather a bad taste on the tongue and rather a wry twist on the lips. But if nothing worse than these two things comes of a Labour Government—though its existence will remain one of the *mirabilia* of this *annus mirabilis*—there will not be much need to weep as well as to wonder.

And unless something very comic or really tragic in the political way occurs later in the year,¹ the exhibition—far surpassing anything at Wembley—which the leaders of the Liberal and Labour parties made of themselves, almost contemporaneously with the opening of the great show, will hold the palm. In fact it is difficult to imagine it beaten. Whether anybody except Mr. Asquith—whether even Mr. Asquith himself—believed in the “lead” theory, with its companion assumption that the led animal would be very good and grateful, and bite nobody but the *other* holder of the lead when he richly deserved it, one cannot say. There may have been more reasons than such belief for the indignant squeals, which were changed into purrs when the Labour Budget fished for votes with the old Liberal bait of lessened indirect taxation.² But one would

¹ At the moment of revising, matters not at all comic—German, Irish, Russian, and the apparent toleration of seditious talk—hardly promise even comfort.

² Another of the infinite *patnesses* of *Pulveris exigui jactu*. “A lump of sugar and a pinch of tea, Set Lab. and Lib. again in harmony!”

fancy that Mr. Macdonald's testimonial as to *Conservatives* being trustworthy when they gave their word might rankle a little.

Some newspapers were impertinent enough to suggest that Labour Ministers would behave better if they were allowed to have their wives beside them in Parliament. I should never have dreamt of saying such a thing myself, but I own that it reminded me of a pleasant experience just fifty years ago. With one of the most agreeable of Procurators-Fiscal—dead, alas! long since—I was staying at the well-known Inn at Drumna-drochit, and we heard that, up the glen at Balmaca'an, there was a specially fine wild-cat. The then Lady Seafield's gamekeeper very kindly let us into the stableyard, where, in a large cage, was the cat. He was a splendid animal, two feet long at least, hanging by his elbows on one of the branches of a barked tree, glaring at us with fiery yellow eyes under his flattened skull, and swearing continuously under his breath; while, in agreeable completion-contrast, a kitten or two crawled

or climbed about, as yet unable to swear, but spitting in laudable imitation of their sire. (The mother was not visible, abiding, after the Greek ¹ fashion, in the closed part of the cage.) “That’s a Tartar,” I said to the keeper. “Tartar, sir?” said he, “ye should ha’ seen him before we caught *her*,” pointing to the gynaeceum.

XV. *Lucretius*.—There lies before me—sole relic of a considerable collection of such things—a little book, little at least in length (5 inches) and breadth (4 ditto), but fattened in thickness by interleaving, and bound in smooth limp yellow calf with a small black label on the back, bearing a single word. Whether the fashion has survived in Oxford I do not know, but in 1864 (which date, with a name and “Coll. Mert.” is inscribed on the flyleaf) the bookshops were crammed with editions of the classics, ready prepared in this

¹ Cats are Greek in many ways—gracefulness, dignity, a certain untrustworthiness, and others. “Egyptian, you mean?” says the sciolist. He may settle that matter with several -ologists—Egypt-, Archæ-, and others.

wise, and men's rooms with the same. The blank pages are more or less industriously defiled with annotations. The name inside on the copy before me (much better written than it would be now) is mine, and that outside on the label, loose and frayed, is "Lucretius."

It is a good many years since 1864, but more still have passed since I first fell in love with the *De Rerum Natura*, picking up at a bookstall, as I walked home from King's College School, a copy of Creech's edition (*not* his translation). Whether we actually read the First Book at school I cannot for the life of me be sure; perhaps some one of my contemporaries in the Upper Sixth of 1860-63 may remember. But I fixed on the whole for a "Mods" book as soon as I had got my Postmastership, and settled down to solid reading of it as soon as the rather useless and disturbing fuss of "Smalls" was over. By this time, of course, Munro's great book was out: and I used it. But it had not yet made much way in Oxford for the poet, and, unless I am under a

delusion, when I went into the Schools at Midsummer 1865 I had a "written paper," though it must have been the last time that such an indignity¹ befell the master of the "mightiest line" in Latin. One had, too, besides Creech (who, though old, is not contemptible) and his gatherings from Lambinus and Marullus and other Renaissance scholars; besides Gassendi and other commentators or illustrators of matter, Lachmann—almost a typical example of German philological competence and æsthetic blundering; while the seventy pages of various readings from the Deux Ponts edition, which the Tauchnitz includes, gave one plenty of scope for selection and consideration.

However, it is not from the point of view of technical scholarship that I propose to deal with this subject. I have confessed more than once that this never was my strong point, and so much of it as I ever had is no doubt stale stuff now.

¹ A written paper signified that so few had taken the subject that it was not worth printing.

But for literature as literature, and especially for poetry as poetry, I am fool enough to believe, and have been encouraged in the belief by some not undistinguished authorities, that I have always had some little inborn and fairly cultivated power of discrimination and appreciation. With the possible exception of Aeschylus, I cannot think of any classic who aroused in me that feeling which David (not a good fellow always, but with redeeming points) expressed so admirably in regard to the sword of Goliath, "There is none like that, give it me," so much as Lucretius.

He brings you down at once with the marvellous combination of sweetness and strength in the invocation of Venus, and he never lets you go till that ghastly picture of the Plague at Athens—versified from Thucydides or not—which ends with the line, curiously satirical:

Rixantes potius quam corpora desererentur.

Satirical in itself, but with a doubled and intenser satire as it sends you back, from the sanguinary

struggles round the pyres of the plague-struck city, to the opening picture of the lovers in each other's arms. I know no other poet, except, perhaps, Victor Hugo¹ at his very best, who manages to combine contrast or sweetness and strength in this way, while Lucretius is never silly, as Hugo too often—in fact very often—is, and possesses what we may call an “upper range,” which Hugo never reaches. Everybody worth attending to who has dealt with the poem—I have seen a reference to some recent treatment in this sense with which I am not acquainted—has noticed the extraordinarily *religious* character of its apparent atheism; the solemnity of its free-thinking; the mystical intensity of its seemingly materialist thought. I cannot help chuckling sometimes as I compare the modern “atom,” and all its constantly increased mechanical peculiarities, with its Lucretian ancestor, in nature if

¹ Of course Mr. Swinburne has said this better about Hugo than any one else is likely to say it; but every competent critic of the greatest of French poets must have felt it.

not name—a cross between a shooting-star and an angel—a thing of infinite possibilities controlled by unknown laws.

But I do not pretend that it was this sort of thing that made me fall in love with Lucretius at the age of fourteen or fifteen, any more than I admit that the attraction was the naughtiness at the end of the Fourth Book, which gave Macaulay an opportunity for an extra *prod* at Dryden. Indeed there is hardly anything attractive about this—that he might have made it so had he chosen the opening passage shows—except the Day-of-Judgement contrast rung in by the terrible “*nequidquam!*” introduced *thrice* at the most voluptuous moments. Further, the whole business, except for these sardonic-passionate revolutions of thought, is treated scientifically rather than hedonistically; and I see from my sixty-year-old notes that ancient medical writers cited our poet as a sober specialist in the subject.

But that very *nequidquam!* gives us the return key to the heart of a quite different matter, the

amazing command of all the means of poetry which Lucretius unites with his fullness of its spirit. The way in which this *molossus*¹ grips and stops the run of the verse is in a small way (not to some tastes so very small) miraculous. And all the way through—from the embraces of Mars and Venus, and the flash-picture of the gods *ῥεῖα ζῶοντες*, and the contrasted detail of the sacrifice of Iphigenia—these miracles of poetical expression, which I, for my part, so rarely find in Virgil, occur.

Some people, I believe, find Lucretius's massiveness clumsy:² I should be sorry for myself if I did. It thoroughly suits his main subject; it surrounds the whole poem with a strange atmosphere and a stranger music, which completes, and to a large extent constitutes, its idiosyncrasy; it can be exchanged for grace when

¹ Molossus prosodically means a foot of three long syllables considered by itself: zoologically a mastiff.

² I find, after writing this, that Mr. Mallock (see note at end of this Scrap) thought the poem mostly prose. But it is fair to say that he added qualifications so numerous that a first surprise gives way to another.

he chooses; and, above all—but following on the last observation and of itself destroying any imputation of clumsiness—it is absolutely under the artist's command. If his architecture is Cyclopean, it is because he chooses it to be Cyclopean: and he gives you details, passages, panels, as it were, of almost any order or style you like, Classical or Gothic.

There is something curiously attractive in what may seem, to those who have not eyes to see, *clichés* or *chevilles*—stock phrases or padding. The shock of the *nequidquam* has been noted, and can hardly be denied. I feel it as I felt it sixty years ago, and have felt it ever since. But I do not think it is mere fancy that attaches, in my mind, a singular force to his frequent use of the very business-like and, it might seem, unpoetic words *adde quod*,¹ *denique*, *illud in his rebus*, etc. They have, of course, the most dissimilar contexts, from the gloomy one noticed already to the purely scientific discussion of thunder in the

¹ *V. sup.* pp. 32, 34 on *Accidia*.

Sixth Book. But they have the poetic power of a refrain.

His spondaic endings and a certain "end-stopped" character in his versification generally have, I believe, proved, if not chokepears, caviare to the general; but for some of us they certainly add to, rather than take from, the singularly harmonious (in both senses) character of the whole work. Lucretius never hurries you, and is never himself to be hurried. The majesty of his manner is in no way theatrical, but it *is* majestic. And yet, to come back to the beginning, it never fails to suggest the possibility of grace and not seldom admits its actuality; while, as to the flashes¹ of definitely pictorial illustration that he throws in, he is here, as elsewhere, almost alone among ancient poets. *Percottaque saecla calore*, "the races baked brown [Scotch bakers call it 'fired'] with heat," strikes me at one opening. At another:

Humida saxa super viridi stillantia musco,

¹ Mallock admits these, and I confess with pleasure that he had anticipated me, though I did not know it, in the suggestion of a Dante parallel.

with the two first words repeated from the last of the line before, simply puts the thing on the wall for me better than at least some Academicians would. How easily does he become more than Horatian in simple common sense perfectly expressed:

Vitaque mancipio nulli datur, omnibus usu,

and then (literally a little earlier) rise far above this level in the famous

Cur non ut plenus vitae conviva recedis?

however often it may be urged against him
“ But I am *not plenus* ” ?

No “ scrap,” however, could hold a hundredth part of the bricks of the house that one could produce from Lucretius: though in hardly any case would they be really satisfactory. For, admirable as are his passages and his lines, it is the sustained grandeur of the whole which is the most remarkable thing about the *De Rerum Natura*. Virgil’s *Felix qui potuit* was very pretty and creditable, of course; but, to speak plainly, the “ *knowledge* of

the causes of things " is *not* precisely the subject of which it is easiest to make good poetry. No one has shown more victoriously than Lucretius himself how entirely it is " the riding that does it," the treatment, not the substance. It seems to me that he is, with Dante, the grandest of all poets—Shakespeare does not come in here, for his *genus* does not admit of *continuous* grandeur, though here, as everywhere, he can beat any one when it suits him—far grander than Milton for anything like continuance of atmosphere, style, and poetical music. That, again like Dante, he has a pervading melancholy is not surprising—it could hardly be otherwise. I don't know what I originally gave for my Creech: it may have been sixpence, and can hardly have been more than a shilling. But if values of different kinds were exchangeable in common terms, I wonder what sum of money could express the profit and the delight resulting from that transaction.¹

¹ The above was written on the text as described, and " unsupplemented " (to use a capital word employed by a writer in the *Times* on the day I finished

XVI. *A Rectification*.¹—At p. 179 of *A Second Scrap Book* I quoted from memory—and that a forty years' memory, not so much of reading as of hearing—a fragment of the late Mr. Mallock's verse-parody of Mr. Swinburne. I did not guarantee its correctness, and my friend Sir Herbert Stephen at once, but then likewise from memory only, suggested a somewhat different version. He has since discovered the printed original in the *St. James's Gazette* and most kindly let me see it. The whole is pretty long and of

it) by anything later than Munro or Sellar (whose admirable *Roman Poets of the Republic* I ought to have included). Until I had finished this paper I had never read the late Mr. Mallock's book which I mentioned in speaking of him in *Scrap Book II.*, and which has been further glanced at in notes above. I have read it now, and it disappointed me a little, though I do not quite agree with an ill-mannered and -tempered person who has pencilled in the London Library copy "rather poor" as to Mallock's verse-translations.

¹ I think this may follow, not unpleasantly to readers as it certainly does not to the writer, on the foregoing. Perhaps I ought also to say that the fact of Mr. Mallock's "conversion" has, I understand, been questioned. And as we are "rectifying" let me add that a correspondent reminded me, in reference to my account of Claverhouse's words in *A Scrap Book*, p. 12, that it was, traditionally, not the culprit himself but his widow who lodged the protest. But the correction included an admission that my argument was not affected.

most excellent quality throughout. But the phrase I quoted is itself very slightly different:

Doing to her divers and disgusting things

(instead of "Do to thee"), and comes in a context which I had not remembered. "Her" refers to Freedom:

I will cling about her neck as a child clings,
 Rewounding with my kiss
 Each scarce-healed cicatrice,
Doing to her divers and disgusting things:
 Whilst in her ears my chant,
 New risen and reboant,
Sounds as one sounds who, being senseless, sings.

I am not sure that the last line is not almost as admirable as, while it is less caricaturing than, the one I misquoted. And I say this as an unrepentant and immutable Old Swinburnian, as far as his poetry is concerned. The whole piece ought to be reprinted, and I hope will have been when this fragment appears.

XVII. *The Grinning She*

Run, run, Orlando, carve on every tree,
The fair, the chaste, *but not the grinning*, She.

As You Like It (slightly altered).

What particular Serpent was it who, not more, I think, than twenty or thirty years ago, persuaded the general Eve, when she is photographed in any public and social circumstances more specially, but sometimes in individual and more or less private ones, to grin and show her teeth?

The thing began, of course, with actresses; then it passed to brides; and now, when the doubtless amiable childishness of the age requires picture-theatres and picture-papers—nay, can't get up at 6.30 in the summer unless a watch or a clock is made, as Mr. Weller might say, to "lie wisely" and tell it that it is 7.30—the craze is exhibited in all sorts of conditions. Whole wedding-parties, whole companies on the stage, whist-drives and dances among the not exactly "hupper suckles," etc. etc., give us dozens and

scores of female faces, all—with a few exceptions of better taste and sense—grinning like the pussies of Cheshire.

And it is all so ugly, and so irrelevant. You want to see whether an actress can act, or at any rate, if she can't, whether she can look pretty. As for brides, I often wonder, while I turn the page as rapidly as possible, whether the bridegrooms don't think of Amine the Ghoul in *The Arabian Nights*, and begin themselves to wonder whether it will be safe to go to sleep in the close neighbourhood of such expectant fangs. And the grouped flocks, which rather remind one of the late Mr. Nettleship's illustration to O'Shaughnessy's *Bisclaveret*, burlesqued and vulgarised from its original *frisson*! *Who* introduced this hideous absurdity? I ask again, and how does it come about that any sensible woman or girl doesn't do it first in the glass and see how hideous it is, at any rate (for here, as elsewhere, there may be exceptions), in nineteen cases out of twenty?

It may be answered, "Oh, it was the fault of the old photographers, especially the cheap ones," who certainly had a knack of saying, "Now, Madam [or, for the matter of that, 'Sir'], look pleasant" or "cheerful," or something of that sort. But they had been doing this for at least another forty or fifty years earlier before this fashion came in. With regard to actresses, it may be urged that they must grin, or the gallery wouldn't know they are smiling. The bride may be anxious to prove that she is not a Victorian, and has not the slightest intention of weeping, which, by the way, *I* never saw a Victorian bride do, though they usually had the decency not to snigger. As for the *αἱ πολλαί*, they may be so delighted at "getting into the papers" that they can't help it.¹ But in all cases, except the rarest, it is so unnecessary! and in all, except rarer ones still, it is so ugly!

¹ An old, but never very wise and now simply foolish, explanation is that the grinners wish to show that they *have* teeth, and pretty ones. As no one, except after examination not commonly vouchsafed to the public, can now tell real teeth from false, this explanation has lost all validity it ever had.

“What! do you call smiles ugly?” says the person of Paraguay. “Have not the poets rightly extasiated themselves over smiles?” Quite rightly. There is nothing prettier than a smile, especially when it is bestowed, as the late Mr. Hobbes might have put it, for “a compliment to wit, or an acknowledgment of pleasure.” But in the first place a smile is not a grin, and does not necessarily require any exposure of the teeth at all. Indeed the best part of it is done by the eyes; and the Lord help any man who is smiled on without the eyes sharing, for either the Devil or, what is worse, the Spirit of Hopeless Stupidity, is at hand. Also (and here the teeth may, though they need not, take their part) the essence of the smile is that it is a *flash*, that it passes, though it may succeed or renew itself as rapidly and frequently as the occasion calls for. Now these dreadful exposures of pearl or ivory, or what you will, are stereotyped. You can’t say to the girl, “For God’s sake, shut your mouth!” They contort the face: a real smile sweeps over it, but

does not in the least contort it. They not only expand the nostrils, but they *fix* the expansion (in which for the moment there might be no harm and much good) thus preventing the quiver for which Barbey d'Aurevilly, hardly with exaggeration, called those features as expressive as the eyes themselves. There is no limit to their hideousness, except, again, in very rare cases. There may be, and, in fact, are, girls whom even the Comprachicos could not make other than charming.

Therefore, if any one man did invent the fashion, let him be punished in Hades by being made to sit eternally at a narrow dinner-table with nothing, or sham food, on it, and a bodiless face opposite, with its teeth showing and its mouth set in a perpetual grin!

XVIII. "*Sweet Butter.*"—A lady who had performed the amiable office of transcribing my first *Scrap Book* into Braille, had the further graciousness to think that the following recipe might please me. And so it does, though I am

not much of a sweet-eater, doubtless, as Trelawney, by Thackeray's account, observed to a younger abstainer from sweets, because "my tastes are corrupted by gluttony and strong drink." But I own it reads extremely well, and I publish it by permission:

"Take one pound of Barbados sugar, smooth out all lumps with a wooden spoon, then pour over it an egg-cup of rum¹ and mix very thoroughly. While mixing melt, but be careful not to boil, half a pound of butter, then mix *this* with the sugar and rum, pouring on a little at a time and stirring well. When all is thoroughly mixed pour into a basin, and when set sift over the top a little castor sugar. This is eaten in Cumberland with oatcake, but is quite good on bread or plain biscuits."

I suggested to this most elect lady that it sounded like a sort of soft toffee, but she did not altogether accept the suggestion. However,

¹ "Pussyfoot," notes my benefactress with admirable scorn, "of course, uses lemon juice instead of rum! *but this concoction I have not tasted.*"

others who have tried it rather agree; and it has been very popular with those who love "sugared plates." Only, to make it good, you must get real West India stuff, not the, in both texture and colour, sandy and too often flavourless rubbish which nowadays goes for "brown."

XIX. *Conservatism I.*—In the spring of the present year,—when the Labour Ministry had settled down a little to its in one way easy but in another hardly, one would think, pleasant task of being kept upright first by a box on the ear by Liberals and then by one from Conservatives,—there appeared in the *Times* an interchange of letters on the subject of Conservatism itself, which seemed to me to possess a good deal more interest and value than such things usually have. As far as this concerned the words Ideal and Idealism, this subject is dealt with elsewhere.¹ But the text, as is the way of texts, allowed itself to be

¹ See, as a sort of overture to this, the paper headed "Idealism" above, p. 79.

branched off into all sorts of "uses," and it occurred to me that a somewhat more complete treatment of Conservatism itself might, even in the small space here available, be possible, and perhaps in its modest way profitable. I have no complaint—very much the reverse—to make of the way in which the political part of these little books has been treated by reviewers. Perhaps the very diversity and miscellaneousness of the other parts has done something to convince fair-minded opponents that mine is not exactly the case of a mere bookworm inheriting, or haphazardly taking, an obsolete view of politics at the beginning of his career, shutting himself up in his study, and considering that he has all necessary political verbs already conjugated in his trunk.

As a matter of fact, I doubt whether any one, from the now rather rare gold-spoon-in-mouth-born-M.P.-at-twenty-one-and-ever-after of fact or fancy, to the intelligent (or unintelligent) errand-boy who may become a Minister in a Labour Government, has ever "kept up" with political

facts more than I have. But when I was thinking of including something on the subject, in this sort of testament, it suddenly occurred to me that I had, a year or two before the War, written, "by request," for a rather ambitious publication which a younger friend of mine had planned, a study of Conservatism from my own and other people's points of view. "The fight didn't come off," like Mr. Foker's with the post-boy, and I don't think that even the *Editor Candidatus* ever saw my discourse. Certainly nobody else, save the writer, ever did. Nor do I think that the cuckoo cry of "Obsolete" should prevent my printing it now, with a very few alterations to bring facts up to date and a certain number of footnotes to fortify arguments.

Among the numerous observations by which the late Sir W. S. Gilbert proved that poets, instead of being liars, are the most truthful of writers, that well-known one as to the innate character of Liberalism or Conservatism is, no

doubt, one of the most triumphant and convincing.¹ In the last resort, the final analysis, Akinetos and Orion are certainly distinguished only by characteristics which are purely æsthetic. To one ultimate cast of mind and temper, that is to say of being, the methods and the objects of what is vaguely called Liberalism are distasteful; and those of its offspring (as Death was the offspring of Sin) Labour essentially disgusting and ruinous. To another the objects and the methods of what is as vaguely called Conservatism are contemptible, unsatisfactory, at worst horrific and capable of causing indignation. All these terms on both sides, it will be observed, belong to the æsthetic, not the logical, category.

In general, however, if not universally, Love and Hatred, which, as has been observed of old, are really at the root of all things, summon to their aid—or perhaps it would be more strictly correct

¹ I saw it denied the other day, in circumstances which make the denial a still more triumphant and convincing ratification. But *I* should not deny that actual arrangements of all sorts by no means facilitate the true development of the innate bias.

to say, transform themselves into—operations of the understanding, which, by the strength of that simulating tendency which affects humanity so strongly, sometimes seem to be the original motives. I suppose it was the logical, the historical, and other parallel aspects of Conservatism that I was originally ¹ intended to deal with, and there is no difficulty in doing this. Indeed I believe that from some fifty or sixty years of study of actual and historical politics, nearly twenty of which were mainly occupied in political journalism, I could give a perfectly fair account of the opposite aspects of Liberalism itself. But the congenital love and loathing will, and would, remain in each case.

Of that love and that loathing in themselves there were little need to speak, and speaking of them could only be rhetorical in nearly the worst sense. The essential disgustingness of Democracy, for instance, to a born Tory cannot be uttered, though it might be spluttered—a

¹ In the abortive publication noted above.

degenerate form of utterance of which I am not fond. But what seems to some the essential *folly* of it can be, and has been, set forth over and over again, in preaching which, of course, has no effect save on the converted. That the *Liberum Veto* of the Poles is at once the only true form and the hopeless *reductio ad absurdum* of the democratic principle is an impregnable truth; and it is only one of the consoling ironies of existence that this vetoing power of the individual, not to be denied in principle except at the sacrifice of the only possible argument for democracy, would, if it were carried out in practice, make democratic government, "reform," change of any kind, all but, if not absolutely, *impossible*.

So, again, it is probably impossible to make partisans of Land Nationalisation, of Trades Unions, of other things on the other side, understand how appallingly *unattractive* the results of the doctrines of "redistribution of luck,"¹ of the

¹ This phrase, the exact origin of which I forget but which was popular enough at the time for me to put it in inverted commas, died out during the

smallest possible work on the individual's part in return for the greatest possible allotment of other people's money, and so forth, seem to *us*. But we certainly can show that by sedulous redistribution of luck you will soon reach a point where there will be no luck left to redistribute; and that the readjustment of capital and labour on the ratio of $\cdot 001$ foot-pounds of work to $1\cdot 00$ money pounds of wages will be even sooner arrested by that malignant aristocrat and despot, Nature.

But all this has been repeated so often and so vainly that one may perhaps take the matter on the angles of a fresher moral oxygen.

I have often said that I have no great fancy for the *name* "Conservatism."¹ It was not born in a very happy hour, nor has it had a particularly glorious history. Proper names had much better be strictly meaningless, useful for denotation, but connoting nothing. At the present moment a

War. But it has been recently revived in the more laconic form of "Transfer," thus shortening *it* and modernising "Convey" at one stroke.

¹ It is, at any rate, better than "Unionist," which is at present blushing nonsense.

“Conservative” in England cannot logically object if any one asks him whether he wishes to perpetuate the Trades Disputes and Parliament Acts, and the abandonment of Southern Ireland to its own and Some One Else’s devices. Still, mankind, among its not very numerous graces, has that of condoning rather freely in others the illogicality of which it feels itself guilty; and Conservatism is generally taken as the effort, or at least the wish, to conserve one particular set or side of political belief and system. It becomes, indeed, increasingly difficult to define that set or side or phase, because the opposite phase or side or set has been transforming itself, or at least altering its mottoes and propositions, so singularly of late years. “The Rights of Man” have become “The Rights of the Working Man, who does not work more than $\approx$ hours a week and who belongs to a Union.” “Liberty” has disappeared altogether. “Equality” has been hypnotised by the Trades Disputes Act, and as for Fraternity!

But in so far as anybody cares for or thinks about politics at all now, the old ideals, so singularly metamorphosed in practice, retain a shadowy reality. According to these ideals, Conservatism means a political creed which may be drawn up somewhat as follows: "Political justice involves the absolute freedom of every man to do, or not to do, what he will, so long as he does not interfere with the parallel freedom of another or, as it is popularly put, 'make a nuisance of himself'; the maintenance of every one in the possession of all property that he has acquired, otherwise than by fraud or force; the restriction of the action of the State to the minimum required by the two previous articles; and the maintenance of the safety of the State itself, with the distribution of taxation as evenly as possible, so that, while each pays his fair share for the protection and benefit he receives, no person or class shall be taxed to pay for the protection or benefit of another. Out of ethical and religious rather than political obligation (as well as for its own benefit), the State may, and

should, provide for the poor (not so by their own fault), the sick, etc., but this is to be regarded rather as a public charity and exercise of wisdom on the State side than as a public or private right on the other."

To secure and carry on this system of government a mixed form of Monarchy and Aristocracy, with such popular representation as may serve at once as power-raiser and safety-valve, has been found to be the best in this country, though the system has required careful adjustment and balance even here, has never worked really well anywhere else, and has sometimes broken down even with us. Unlimited and unchecked Democracy has its historically inevitable results of tyranny, bureaucracy, corruption, and the disappearance of law, justice, and personal freedom. Large subsidiary questions arise in connection with matters like the Church, Education, fiscal details, and others, but they are governed by the same general principles of respect for Freedom and Property in the individual, of maintenance of both, and of

Privilege in so far as it hurts nothing but vanity and bad blood in other individuals, and gives to the State itself that traditional interest and substance as to which it is not necessary to do more than "say ditto to Mr. Burke."

XX. *Conservatism II.*—So after all, perhaps, there is some defence possible even for the *name* Conservatism. It conserves and preserves the general principles just mentioned, without which it is impossible that States can produce or provide anything better, not merely than "flies in summer," but than the rotting loathsomeness which those flies sometimes generate in the carcasses of beings once alive and beautiful and good. The *nunc stans* may be an impossibility; but the *nunc*, say what you will against it, has the enormous advantage not merely of possible, but of actual existence, and of power to continue that existence. Apply the Radical fly, and what do you get? Look at America; look at France (you may look nearer home if you like); look at Italy,

Spain, Germany (where the Conservative party is¹ perhaps more nearly "the stupid party" than has ever been known); look at Russia, where even a born Pantagruelist can hardly laugh for weeping at the result of applying "representative government."²

But are we never to change? Well! there are certain circumstances in which "the stationary state" would be not altogether undesirable. But in the conditions of this universe it is much more desirable than possible. "Earth being so good, would Heaven seem best?" Supposing the Elizabethan period proper, or the middle of the eighteenth century (a delightful time, though clouds were gathering), or that halcyon interval between the Crimean War and the "leap in the dark," when even the Mutiny brought out the

¹ Whether the War has enlightened it at all seems doubtful. But the text as it was written seems worth keeping.

² This was, as will be seen, written during the first absurdities of that poor "Duma" in which our Liberals took such delight. What has followed need hardly be dwelt upon; but if any one can know what Russia has been during the last six or seven years and be anything but an out and out Tory, the Lord have mercy upon him!

remains of our greatness in action, and we touched one of the summits of our greatness in literature, while the last remnants of an orderly balance in constitution kept things political steady—supposing these to have been absolutely maintained, would it have been absolutely good? Probably not: one concedes that much to the *Advocatus* (it is unnecessary to mention who fees and instructs him) on the other side.

We can't always help things going to the Devil; but we can make them go slowly, and sometimes turn them out of the Diabolic way. For doing this there is no such help as History. It is curious that, of late years, some of its titular representatives seem inclined to repudiate the mighty and most valid claim of their Grand Prior, Thucydides, as to the *teaching* power of their Art or Science. I read the other day a complaint, apparently scornful in intention but almost fretful in expression, that people *would* construe the past in terms of the present, and *vice versa*. Well, if they did this blunderingly, so much the worse for

them, no doubt; but if they did it intelligently, so much—ininitely so much—the better.

The lesson of all History is Conservatism, though no doubt not absolute resistance to change and still less thoughtless and one-sided reaction.¹ People talk about Progress. If you look back you will see that *real* Progress—if there is any—has been rarely, if ever, effected by legislation. It has “grewed” like Topsy, and legislation has, at best, acknowledged its growth. On the contrary, changes effected by legislation have been constantly due to mere lust for legislating, or to private motives of various kinds, or to senseless outcry, and more senseless crotchet, without the slightest public demand.

Catholic Emancipation was perhaps overdue, though anybody who looks impartially at its results may hesitate, for the *posts* in this case look sadly like *propters*. The First Reform Bill could

¹ That reaction so frequently fails is, in fact, a strong argument for original resistance to change. If you once let a good thing go, it is hard to get it back. But this is no reason for not getting rid of a hopelessly bad thing.

not have been, at the time, resisted; but if we had had more intelligent Prime Ministers for twenty years before, it could have been "eased off" in instalments so as to do very little damage. That of 1867, as everybody knows who knew anything of politics at that time, was not really called for by any popular demand at all, and was the result of political gambling and political cowardice, the penalty of which was, after the manner of politics, exacted partly at once and partly seventeen years later from the peccant party. The disestablishment of the Irish Church brought about the new Home Rule movement, reinforced the effects of Emancipation, and so transformed the old troublesome but not violently dangerous "Irish Brigade" into an Irish Rebel Army, which had to be bought off with the inevitable ill-success of such buyings. In all these cases, and in many minor ones which could be mentioned, the neglect of the great principle of sound Conservatism militant—"Fight for it as long as you possibly can consistently with saving as much of it as you possibly

may; but stave off the fighting by gradual and insignificant concessions where possible"—was conspicuous; and disaster came.

Perhaps, indeed, the very name Conservatism, though open to some objections, is defensible from a double point of view—the lines of vision from which have been indicated already, but which may now be singled and straightened out. In the first place one conserves the existing, not merely from a mere inertia of custom; not merely from (in some cases) actual liking; but from the most strictly logical of all political considerations—that it has been found *to work*. “Yes, to work badly,” comes, of course, the ready Radical retort. But as a matter of fact—historic and demonstrable—things have seldom—in England one may say never—worked so badly that almost any change must be for the better; while, on the other hand, only the most extravagant believers in Reform and Progress would contend that changes have in no cases been for the worse. Of course, there are certain historic exceptions, such as the later days

of the Roman Republic or the state of things which brought about the French Revolution, in which things had got so bad that they *had* to go.¹ But it took rather more than a millennium to get the world again into working order in the first case, while the country concerned in the second has taken more than a century to make itself happy and is hardly so yet. And, as a general rule, though the world may not have gone exactly "very well," it has gone much more tolerably than the grumblers admit, under most *régimes*, and has improved far less under new ones than even the least extreme innovators hoped beforehand. The present writer, not many years ago, experienced a considerable amount of amusement, just sufficiently seasoned with human sympathy, when he read a confession of the "Mr. Stansfeld" of his youth—Mazzinophile, ultra-

¹ I am not likely to be accused of sympathising with the French Revolution. It had, like its successor in Russia, no good quality whatever, and like that, was a contagious disease. The *ancien régime* had one or two good qualities, and was not contagious in its bad ones—but these were very bad indeed, and most unfortunately numerous.

Radical, and one of the fathers of all such as would turn things upside down, for no other reason than that they are actually arranged the other way: "This is not the Italy for which I laboured, and which I longed to see." Alas! it never is, and the chances are that in endeavouring to make "it" what "it" is not, you will lose at least something not bad in what "it" is.

Matthew Arnold was not precisely a Conservative, but he consciously or unconsciously opened the door of his own fortress to his own Barbarians when he wrote certain delightful lines about

Ah! so the quiet was
So was the hush!

Of course, one knows a great deal too much history to maintain that there ever was a period of absolute hush and quiet, or that things have never altered for the better. But there was generally compensation of a disagreeable kind even at that time, and they nearly always altered for the worse again afterwards. Nor need any one who

thinks and writes thus be afraid of "the woad argument." As a matter of fact, woad must have been a cheap if chilly fashion of clothing, must have set off pretty figures quite nicely, and must have made luggage delightfully portable; while scythed chariots, if slower than motor-cars, must have been more effective in war¹ and less dangerous in peace. But a man who would have been a champion of woad, at the time when togas were argued for, need by no means feel obliged to argue for woad itself now. Sixty generations cannot be backleaped: it is enough to be able to see that, generally if not always, the Conservatives in each generation were wiser than the Reformers. More particularly, though this is constantly denied by Radicals, the evil consequences predicted on the Conservative side *have* almost always actually followed. The fact seems to be that the deniers take their own liking for these consequences, in the strangest fashion, as a disproof of their

¹ "Tanks" and "dragons" are only developments of the chariots ultimately, though with adoption of more recent motor powers.

adversaries' foresight. And this, by the way, is an additional proof of that final resolution of all political motive into "like" and "dislike" which was noticed at the beginning.¹ There is no argument more constantly stigmatised as a "Noodle's Oration" argument than the "thin end of the wedge." And yet there is none in which Noodle—or for the matter of that the wisest Solomon of the world's maxim-makers—has been more thoroughly justified. The thick end always has followed the thin; but as the real noodles of every day have come to like the thick as well as the thin, they fail to acknowledge the sequence.

But it may be said, "Is not all this 'rotting'?" Do you—being an old man, a student to some real extent of history, 'as people suppose you' not entirely devoid of brains, and by your own account practically acquainted with the inside as well as the outside of politics for the last forty or fifty years—really disbelieve in Progress?" Well, as

¹ Also *v. inf.* on "Taste," No. XXXIX.

it happens, I do. That I might have been personally uncomfortable, in some earlier ages, I have admitted in reference to "the woad argument." But *they* were not personally uncomfortable; and in the successive stages by which they and their successors attained what we consider personal comfort, they gave up a good many of what I should consider *vitae*, and therefore *comfortiae causas*. We are not in danger at the present moment, though there is no knowing what we may come to, with Welsh and Irish ideas to the fore, of the celebrated and almost hackneyed atrocities of the Norman castles of the reign of Stephen. But is the present¹ statutory license of Trades Unions to hold the whole kingdom to rack and ransom much more tolerable than the (at no time legal) violence of Norman barons towards individuals? We have got rid of

¹ By one of the odd coincidences which happen so often, I was revising, but here not altering, this paper, certainly written years ago, at the very moment when a certain great Labourist was talking of what "he" should do with "his men" in a London Strike. Not a word has been added or altered in the above paragraph.

“benevolences,” at the price of as “benevolently” contributing much more to the support of lazy ne’er-do-weels; to the super-education of thousands who will never profit by it; to the relief of parents from the duties which they incur by the fact of parentage, and to the maintenance of a horde of useless officials.

XXI. *Conservatism III.*—The point at the end of the last paper brings one to other possible, and more than defensible, meanings of “Conservatism.” Difficult as it is—in that respect resembling most other cases—to define, there is perhaps no single point of definition more characteristic than that it makes the conservation and preservation of the existing liberty and property of the individual its central principle. *Suum cuique* is its best motto. Of course the other side arrogates that motto also, and opposes the redistributive justice of supposed “rights” and “claims” to the conservative justice involved in maintenance of legally obtained posses-

sion.¹ But it is here that the *logical* superiority of Conservatism is seen at its very strongest. For the whole doctrine of "rights" to something that you have *not* got, not merely involves perpetual assumptions of the most baseless and the most unsupportable kind, but is an endless begetter of fresh claims, and therefore of fresh disturbance. Even the "right to live" rests merely on this one ground of possession, and therefore extends no further than the right of protection against murder. Charity certainly will, morality possibly may, and public utility perhaps ought to add to this protection supererogatory provision for continuance of life; but it is questionable whether strict justice demands it.

As for the insane doctrine that being born in

¹ Too few people, I fear, know those graceful-graceless lines of Dryden's:

" You charmed me not with that fair face,
Though that was all divine;
To be another's is the grace
That makes me wish you mine! "

I wish some deft limner would draw me a Communist gazing on a crisp bank-note or a fine park view, and uttering these verses.

a country gives some right to the possession of the soil of that country, it hardly requires notice: but may be disposed of by the simple question whether persons born at sea acquire thereby an indefeasible title to part of the ship, and to so many yards, furlongs, or miles of ocean deep, with the salt, the fishes, the flotsam, and the treasures described in Clarence's dream as to the bottom thereof appertaining? The "right to work" is certainly undeniable in itself as part of the right to every bodily and mental exercise which does not interfere with others' rights. But as it generally means "the right to receive wages from others," most commonly coupled with "the right to prevent others from working," it need not be much discussed. As for the "right to vote," few rational persons, even on the other side, say much of that now.¹ The franchise is admittedly a device, and merely a device, for securing good government. It is so evidently a means to an

¹ The great change a little later in this respect needs no addition here, for it was not a matter of *argument*.

end that it may be questioned whether even possession of it confers right in this case. But in things which are not mere means to ends but “goods” in themselves—protection from the violence of others towards life, limb, and property; enjoyment of this property, inherited or legally obtained, and the power of transmitting it to others; freedom of individual action in so far as it consists with others’ freedom; liability to taxation only in so far as the needs of the State—not involving largesse or unnecessary employment to individuals or to classes—required; preservation of unharmful privileges, etc., legally or by long prescription enjoyed—in regard to all these things, and to many others too long to prescribe, the simple doctrine of Conservatism is *Je maintiendrai*.

Of course, as in the case of the individual human body, occasions may arise for special treatment, and the wise statesman will take them. Of course, as in that body itself—and in all the best mechanical arrangements which have been devised for assisting, relieving, and reinforcing its

efforts—there must be a certain amount of elasticity, “play,” and “give” in political and social arrangements. It ought to be possible, as in England it always has been hitherto possible, for communication between classes to be effected by a sort of salmon-ladder arrangement. New conditions of life, though their development should never be unnaturally stimulated (as was done by the fatal blunder of Free Trade falsely so called), must be met cautiously, but not too late, any more than too soon, by new arrangements of franchise, representation, and the like. The State may sometimes enlarge its demands (on the terms of reducing them again wherever possible) and increase its interference. But there are certain points at which a wise Conservatism will always resist alteration, and take every possible opportunity of restoring what it may temporarily have become unable to maintain.

The first and most important of these, never carried by the enemy or seriously “lodged in” till lately, has been the maintenance of an unelected or

very indirectly elected Second Chamber to act as a drag upon the First. The existence of this is, in fact, the only possible salvation of a representative system, and the almost universal failure of that system in other countries has been due to the inadequate provision of it.¹ The next is the unremitting resistance (and the still more unremitting endeavour to repeal them if they have passed) to measures which increase the interference of Government with private liberty, which reinforce the army of what the French call *ronds-de-cuir*—subordinate Government officials with work created for them and votes expected of them; the substitution of departmental and commission-made authority for the King's Courts of Justice; and the relief of the citizen from the citizen's private and essential duty of keeping his house and town healthy, educating his children, curing

¹ It has sometimes been thought to have been *over*-provided in the United States; but recent events have shown that to be hardly the case. Besides, the Senate is much too "directly elected." It was the hereditary element and the wholesome dislike of multiplying peers that, till lately, made the House of Lords so invaluable.

his sick, ensuring his family against his premature decease, and maintaining his broken-down parents and relations.

The historical pedant is sometimes moved to inform the historical ignoramus (it is difficult to decide which is the greater nuisance, the first named balancing by his pseudo-“ authority ” the greater numbers of the second) that “ Magna Charta ” was not exactly what it is popularly thought to be and rhetorically eulogised as being. It may be hoped that nobody who is likely to read these pages is also likely to need illumination on that matter, on the technical revocation of the instrument, and such like irrelevances. But it so happens that the popular idea of Magna Charta—as popular ideas have a habit of being when they are old enough, and have not been befouled and contorted by pedants or cranks or politicians, or all three—is not only a very sound and fairly accurate one—*mutatis mutandis et servandis servatis*—but also an almost ideal abstract of a sound political and social constitution such as may be

intelligently and beneficently "conserved"—maintenance of orders in the State; inflexible forbidding of harm to person or property without fair and open trial in the ordinary Courts of Law;¹ *suum cuique sed alienum nemini*.

The above (with the exception of the introductory paragraphs and a few corrections to bring it up to date) was written some years ago; before the War almost certainly, if not even farther back from 1914. "I told you so" is a notoriously irritating and very often, no doubt, a not very effective line of argument. But there is some excuse for it here, inasmuch as events have confirmed the original pretty substantially. In the spring of the present year one woke almost every morning to hear of a new actual or threatened strike, conducted with such insolence of threat

¹ One thing for which all true Conservatives should strive unceasingly is the restoration of the old and precious Law of Conspiracy, on which the most dangerous inroads have recently been made, not only in releasing Trade conspiracies from liability, but in qualifying the individual conspirator's risk by considerations of "motive," "belief," etc., on his part.

and indifference to public welfare as, even since strikes were tolerated, had never been witnessed. We saw, also, the remarkable and very ill-omened spectacle of two candidates fighting as enemies of Socialism to such an effect that, taking round thousands of votes, the transference of one thousand on each side to the Socialist champion would have landed him victor with eight on his side to fourteen on the other—a form of “proportional representation” quite interesting to register, but as an effort of Conservatism just a little futile.

These things, with the presence of a Labour Government and the attitude of the Liberal party, naturally brought about some rather more wide-ranging and at the same time “inging” discussions—of what Conservatism is and what it ought to be—than had been common for a long time. As the matter has been one of lifelong interest and consideration to myself, I thought it might not be impertinent to include here a contribution to the debate. The “Scrap” on

Idealism is intended as a sort of *éclaircisseur* to these three, and that on "Liberalism," *v. inf.*, as a finish of comparison. The sum of the three divisions is that Conservatism is the only form of politics which combines Political Justice, Political (that is to say Historical) Practicability, and a third thing, less often spoken of, Political Beauty. Socialism is rooted in Injustice, has invariably failed, and must invariably fail, in practice, and if it could succeed, would be hopelessly ugly. As for the third form of political faith or unfaith, let us wait till we come to it.¹

XXII. *Aristotle and Bohemia*.—In that very pleasing *Registrum Mertonense* (to short-title it) which was mentioned above, and may be mentioned again, there is a list of the tenements then

¹ The party programme or manifesto, issued on June 20, came after the above was written. It seems to me in all important points unexceptionable. Of course, it disgusted the Pussyfoots, but that is all in its favour. On the other hand it is disheartening to find people falling once more into the foolish and fatal errors touched on in the *Second Scrap Book* ("Tory Democracy"). If Bright Young People consider old things dull, Experience will teach them better—if, as usual, at more and more costly fees.

composing the parish of St. John, Oxford, most of them now merged in the Colleges of Merton itself, Corpus, and Oriel. There are many "Halls," and among them *Aula Aristotle (sic)* and *Aula Bohemie* [ae]. The books of the Chronicles of the *Aula Bohemiae* *might* be interesting, but the juxtaposition of the two in collegiate precincts *is* almost as interesting as may be. For if one were "variating" (*v. iterum supra et infra*), an excellent triad or leash of subjects would be: (1) Whether a college should be entirely under the invocation of Aristotle, that is to say, learned merely? (2) Whether it should be entirely under that of Bohemia, or a place of amusement? (3) Whether the two should not be combined? And the Register would conclude each in its usual manner: (1) *Ubi sustinuit quod non*, (2) *ubi sustinuit quod non*, (3) *ubi sustinuit quod sic*. The learned editor, by the way, is rather hard on the ancient amusements, thinking they would bore *us*—*ubi sustineo quod non*. The great festival of the Kingship of Beans in November (is this the same

as the modern Boar's Head Gaudy in that month?), with its fantastic dresses and speeches from foreign and ancient divinities and princes, looks not unlike a modern "pageant." And they were constantly having *ignes*, as they were called, that is to say, when a Fellow invited all and sundry to eat and drink round the great fire in the middle of the hall. It doesn't sound so bad a Bohemia, and Aristotle had, no doubt, had his turn in the morning.

XXIII. *Mathilde*.—If there were any careful readers in the plural (I shall point out presently that there was at least one in the singular) of a certain *History of the French Novel*, which I was rash enough to publish some years ago, they may remember that I treated Eugène Sue rather cavalierly. But I did do him the justice to quote an observation of Thackeray's that Sue "always tried to attain, and in *Mathilde* nearly succeeded in attaining, a tone *de bonne compagnie*." Now, although Thackeray's *general* criticism was, like

the latitude of the capital of the spiritual Bohemia, "rather uncertain," he rarely or never went wrong about novels, and I have always been curious to read *Mathilde*. I like the name—there is an immortal sentence, the author of which I never can remember, while the sentiment of it I can never forget, "I love Matilda and Matilda loves me: therefore all is well." There is "the daughter of my tu—" Sweet, sweet Matilda Pottingen. All the forms of this name¹—Matilda itself, Mathildis, with Heine's gorgeous picture referred to before,² Mahaud (of the *Légende des Siècles*), Maud (of that ilk), are good, and wedded to great literature.³ I have before now shocked some good folk by admitting that, on the whole, if I were admitted to the Earthly Paradise I would rather stay with Matilda, among the vermilion and

¹ The original, or supposed original, Mechtilde (though I like *Middle* High German particularly) seems to me rather a different *person*.

² *A Second Scrap Book*, p. 256, *note*. My Palace of Art will also have the Empress, escaping from Oxford, as a pendant to the Countess triumphing over an Emperor.

³ For Maude, *v. sup.* p. 97. If least good, it is not bad.

yellow flowers, than go on to Beatrice and the Gryphon. So *Mathilde* (which also is a good form, if not associated with quite such a good author) had some prescription in her favour.

But I never could get hold of the book in time for the *History*, and was unable to go in quest of it to big libraries, so that I had to leave it with this half-blessing of Thackeray's. Only the other day, however, a friend of more than sixty years' standing, and of Heaven knows how many earlier benefits, added to them by pointing out an entry, at my own door, in a catalogue of Mr. Gregory's, and I secured the lady at last.

The book is not a masterpiece, and, as already owned, does not put the ordinary French form of the name on a level, in point of literary association, with any of those others mentioned above. But I should certainly have spoken much more respectfully of Sue if I had read it when I wrote the *History*, and I can quite understand Thackeray's apparent going out of his way to speak of it. I do not think it can have been very

popular—my copy (Brussels, 1841) is of the second edition only, and suspiciously *clean*. Nor is the greater part by far of its huge length—between 1800 and 1900 pages, not indeed large, but closely, though clearly printed—of the kind that readers of *Le Juif Errant* and *Les Mystères de Paris* would greatly care for. It opens, indeed, rather promisingly with a *café*, whose customers are desperately intrigued about a mysterious house opposite: and with a foreign colonel in that house, who (not inexcusably) receives intruders with charges of *cendrée* (“sparrow-dust,” as I feel sure Mr. Kipling will allow me to translate it). Moreover, the book is pervaded by a Brazilian *rasta-quouère* (I don’t think the *word* is as old as 1840, but it comes handy), loathsome to look at, enormously rich, and desperately wicked in every conceivable way.¹ Yet again—rather less than half-way through—two chivalrous gentlemen get hold of this scoundrel when he has just hoccussed

¹ The last man, in short, whom, as the pagan poet so elegantly says, a god would ask to dinner, or a goddess entertain even more agreeably.

the heroine, and after addressing her at great length with the most atrocious propositions, is going to act up to them still more atrociously after she loses consciousness.¹ They not only save *her* but, by the old pirate dodge of a rope round the forehead, make *him* write and sign confessions of all sorts of crimes and disgraceful acts, proceeding further to heat knives for the purpose of branding his forehead. He escapes, but finally, after doing any amount more mischief, is found starved in a secret den of his own, rather like Foster at the end of *Kenilworth*.²

But these and a few other livelinesses of action do not go very far in nearly two thousand pages; and the substance of the book is endless, pitiless, Richardsonian *talk*. The wicked aunt (to some extent, as we may see, excusably)

¹ Which, I am bound to say, she is strangely long in doing. What sort of a narcotic it can have been is difficult to decide.

² This is not quite so brazen as what Alexander the Beloved allowed his young men to do in *Les Louves de Machecoul*, with the escape of Rob Roy at the Fords of Frew. But the French adventure-novelists of 1830-50 did rather regard Sir Walter as "public material."

talks; the two heroines (our Mathilde herself dark, regular-featured, sentimental, rather foolish, and good; the other, Ursule, fair, *retroussé*-nosed, sensual, very clever, and wicked) talk to each other, to their husbands, to their lovers, to everybody, in batches of twenty pages at a time; a mother-in-law—virtuous, but a little trying—talks; the chivalrous gentlemen, one of whom consoles Mathilde at the end, talk; Mathilde's bad husband and Ursule's good one talk—everybody talks when they are not writing letters, which they do with some freedom. Now a book which is all *récit* and no conversation is usually dull; but a long book of twenty-page conversations, which might have been done in two, and not in the least briskly rattled, runs the risk of being *assommant*.

Nevertheless, there are in *Mathilde* the makings of a book of more reasonable length—say one or two volumes instead of six—which would have been of more than average merit. I do not think it blasphemous, or even bold, to say that there are some, if slight, suggestions in the wicked aunt,

Mlle. de Maran, of no less a personage than Her Magnificence the Dowager Countess of Kew, who did not appear till some fifteen years after her. There is one capital scene, where she "roasts" the *rastaquouère* Lugarto on his precious newly acquired arms of *étoiles d'or en champ d'argent*.¹ Nor is the gradual disillusion of Mathilde with the worthless husband, whom she loves passionately till he makes himself impossible, ruins, and, in fact, deserts her, badly done "if 'twere done quickly," or at least not quite so slowly; nor is the plot contemptible if you could shut it up like a concertina. I honestly confess that even now I have skipped seven-league-bootedly, though by long practice I have, I think, acquired the art of seeing something of the country beneath me as I skip. But I am by no means certain that I shall not, if I live long enough, read the whole through. The young gentlemen of the *Granta*, I believe, very generously remarked of *A Second Scrap Book* that though it

¹ "Metal on metal," of course.

was not, unless you were an enthusiast for the author, worth buying (as, indeed, though they didn't say this, how should a book with nearly a whole third of it about Oxford, and another inculcating Toryism, be?), it *might* be worth reading when you had nothing better to do. I think *Mathilde* was worth buying, though I am not an enthusiast for the author; I have found it worth running through, and I may find it worth re-reading "when I have nothing better to do."

XXIV

A FABLE

TO AUSTIN DOBSON

*My Austin, who alone art able
In our dull days to spin the Fable,
Receive, I pray, my verse unkempt
But as a pioneer attempt.*

A Monkey—an industrious beast,
Who served his masters, fast and feast,

And, doomed the public taste to please,
Played many a jest with little ease—
Yet had some hours to himself
And thought to use them—not for pelf.
Such rarities as he might gain
He did collect with toil and pain,
And housed them in a plain tight building
With scarce a thought for paint or gilding;
Then threw them open to the crowd
Even as his fate and chance allowed.

They came with scant delay, and each
Became a critic and would teach.
The Beaver scoffed, flat tail erect,
“ ‘This ape is scarce an *architect*!’ ”
The Eagle cried, “ ‘These side-walls are
Out of the perpendicular!’ ”
The Mole remarked, “ ‘Why, here is
much!
What need I, in my earth, of such?’ ”
The Spider squeaked, “ ‘That angle there
Lacks all proportion!’ ” and the Bear

Growled, “ *I* want honey. What’s the good
Of all this rubbish to *my* mood? ”
So each was wroth for what was *not*.
These were the thanks the monkey got.¹

XXV. *Puissance qui Rend*.—I forget exactly who it was who formulated the axiom *Une puissance qui cesse de prendre et qui commence à rendre est une puissance finie*. Despite its French form (which would be likely enough in any mouth on the subject), it is, I think, attributed to Bismarck, and is certainly Bismarckian enough in meaning. The same language, indeed, supplies an earlier, and undoubtedly wiser, warning in *Qui trop embrasse mal étreint*, the truth of which Bismarck’s country has learnt to its cost since his time. But there is a good deal of truth in the other generally.

¹ *V.l.* of the last couplet:

“ For what was there each cared no jot,
But each was wroth with what was not.”

Written either in '82 or '87, I am not sure which, and never before, so far as I remember, printed. But Dobson liked it, and I think it has something of the Fable rhythm and turn.

And one need hardly say at what country it was originally levelled. That country, home of John Barleycorn himself, has, to an extent greater than it deserved, been allowed the privilege of "getting up again " after it ought, by all rules of the game, to have been finished. But it certainly has tempted Providence as a *puissance qui rendait et qui rend encore*.

I was once favoured by Providence for a short time with a very big drawing-room, which I might, had I chosen, have made a study, and which was loftier even than in ordinary proportion to its length and width. It would have been most suitable for a gigantic *mappa mundi* to cover, partly, the walls. This should have been coloured in on the following principles. Actual British dominions, the sacramental red; countries or districts once held and given up, green; those half-held, half-given up, like India, Southern Ireland, and Mesopotamia, green with thinner or thicker stripes of blushing. Nobody, I suppose, who has not thought about the matter would

believe how extensively he would " see the green " in that map.

To begin at the West—the whole, of course, of North America between Canada and Mexico; part of the West Indies (we had Havana once and might easily have had the whole of Cuba, San Domingo, Porto Rico, and the non-English smaller islands had we chosen). South America shows smaller verdancy, though the Cabots gave us chances not taken. But when we cross the Atlantic backwards, the green patches, some, like Egypt, blush-striped, grow most important. If not a full half of France, something like it was at the same, or different times, ours, and at others we were at least in something like military occupation of Spain. In the Western Mediterranean the Balearic Islands, Malta, and Sicily, were held in different ways, only the middle one remaining to us. How parti-coloured Africa is even now, after we have kindly made room for France and Italy there (Spain had a sort of natural right), nobody need be told. Exactly how the colours

of honest red and foolish green are to be mixed or dappled to express "Mandates" I need not discuss. But it is plain that, putting different times together, a scarcely broken red patch could have been drawn from Jaffa to the Siamese border. The Philippines once were ours, and Java and further Pacific isles; while Australia and New Zealand have not been thrown away *yet*.

Certainly any pious Englishman may still say, "Lord! thou hast given me a goodly heritage!" But if, as in old days, the Lord condescended to talk with man—it is probably fortunate for man that He only does it indirectly—how certainly would He reply, "And how much of it hast thou thrown away?"

XXVI. *Criticism v. Catholicity*.¹—My friend, Mr. Middleton Murry, some time—some pleasant time—my editor, and once my partner

¹ This article, to a certain extent, continues, but will not, I think, be found merely to duplicate that on *Criticism*, No. IV., to be found in *A Scrap Book*, p. 147 *sq.* Indeed it is a sort of "Conclusion" to those articles generally.

in a most agreeable triumvirate (the Poet-Laureate with or above us) for adjudicating on certain literary matter, thinks I am too catholic to be a good critic, if not, indeed, too much so to be a critic at all. I am other good things, it seems, in connection with literature; he says all sorts of nice sayings about me, and proposes rewards, some of which I would much rather go without. But I am much too catholic; I don't "reject" enough things; I am (this is not his way of putting it, but mine) apparently too apt to make criticism an extension, or application to literature, of the glorious psalm or canticle, whereof *every* verse ends "for His mercy endureth for ever."

Now, so far as this concerns me personally, it is a matter of no great interest to the public. But the theory of Criticism which it involves—indeed which it explicitly asserts—seems to me of very considerable interest and, indeed, importance. Of course it is not new in essence—nothing outside the purely mechanical is that. But it is new in phase and phrase; it is quite likely to be taken

up by *les jeunes*, who are, as they frequently tell us in the papers, so anxious to be called into action to redress the want of balance in the old; and I venture to think it mistaken, though there are points about it which deserve "high consideration." So perhaps we may consider it a little here.

Of course, if the fault which Mr. Murry finds with me were *inconsiderate* and *indiscriminate praise*—and if he were justified in finding that fault—I should not even attempt to defend myself. Even the "Mr. Bludyer" style is better than that, and there is a good deal of such praise about just now. But I must be a most "translated" person if this is *my* weakness. One of my most amusing reminiscences, in a small way, is of a club luncheon-party, at which my immediate neighbour was a famous French novelist, while *his* other neighbour was an equally well-known English one, with whom I was not personally acquainted, but whom I had, not long before, reviewed "most politely, most politely," as I trust was my wont, but not too favourably. After some time the

Frenchman turned to me and asked me the meaning of the curious verb to "slate" which his *confrère* had just used. "*Éreinter*," said I, and we all three grinned, for the question was, no doubt, *dolosa*, and carried a little story with it; nor do I believe for a moment that either Briton or Gaul required the translation. Another victim of sarcastic comment once expressed hopes (on a post-card) that I "might continue to regard the universe through a horse-collar"; while a third, rather rashly interrogated as to his views on a somewhat full discussion of his work by me, is reported to have replied, solemnly and after reflection, "That article ought *never* to have been written."

But, as I have said, I don't think Mr. Middleton Murry thought me a mere butter-merchant. What he seems to have objected to is the absence in my criticism of a scheme or schemes precedent, to which the work I criticise has to submit itself before it is even "passed for criticism," much more before it can hope to receive "class" in or

from that process. Now here I feel, as I have often felt before, the want of some phrase or plea corresponding to "Guilty," but expressing absolute refusal to admit any guilt whatever—the position of a *reus* not merely *confitens*, but *confidens* in the best sense and almost *gloriosus*. I own frankly, and with unabashed brow, that I have no such scheme or schemes ready, nay, that if I found one lurking anywhere in my critical office, I should put it in the fire, or broom it out of the house, without hesitation or mercy.

Mr. Murry thinks that "criticism consists primarily in the attempt to order the universe of literature in obedience to the imperious demands of a temperament." I have myself defined it as "the effect of the subjection of the product of one mind to the processes of another." With the (for the nonce) unimportant substitution of "temperament" for "mind," it is clear that these definitions or descriptions have something, nay a good deal, in common; that there is also something the reverse of "in common" is pretty clear

also, and is made perfectly so by Mr. Murry's comments on his own text. I am, to translate according to mine, too catholic in my admission of product to process; I do not "reject" enough; I won't "pretend that things which certainly do exist in reality are not."

Well, once more I grant this. According to my conception of criticism, creation comes before it, and thus in a manner exercises, not suffers, an *imperium*. The critic is not bound to like or accept everything that is brought before him: on the contrary, he is bound to point out—within the limits of what may be called the specification—what he dislikes and refuses. But he must never *prescribe*, in the strictest meaning of that word—must never allow his temperament or his intellect to "order" beforehand what is to be presented to it, and to undergo its temperamental or intellectual processes.

In thus holding and proceeding, I think I am thinking and acting in accordance with the general laws of our universe as regards æsthetics.

Difference, inequality, novelty are as paramount there in the individual, as regularity and its counterparts are in the general from other points of view. The highest pleasures never repeat themselves exactly—part of the intensity of the pleasure is that you can never recollect it with sufficient exactness to expect an exact repetition, or recognise that if it occurred. Now criticism of literature, as of all art, *is* only the record of pleasure or displeasure, appreciated with as much exactness as possible. You cannot “record” beforehand; if you record according to some pre-arranged standard or pattern, it is ten thousand to one that the record will not be a true one.

The whole point of the matter seems to me to lie in the essential Individuality of Art: and it is of Criticism as regards the Art of Literature that we are talking, and of that only. Books are, in a sort, like faces—you cannot foretell in the least what they will be like till you see them, still less what will be their effect on you. And if you make up a scheme beforehand as to what they *ought* to

be like, God help you! in both cases, more particularly on the literary side. The face will, unless you are utterly God-forsaken, make its own way, as was predestined, with you; you will find yourself quite indifferent to kissing a very regularly handsome one, and extremely desirous of performing that mysterious operation on one that violates every rule of Du Fresnoy.¹ But the rules of Du Fresnoy's contemporary [Le] Bossu seem to have had a more malignant operation, and every attempt to "order the universe" in literature is of the Bossutian kind. Certainly you are not to accept every book, any more than you are (forbid it, Heaven!) to kiss every face. You may, if you find you must, decline to accept—"reject," in short; but it must be on account of what the book has done to you, not on account of what you prescribe to the book. And this requires catholicity—at least a catholicity of immediate reception, and of *individual* reception likewise.

Incidentally Mr. Middleton Murry cites, as

¹ Cf. *sup.* the reference (*note*, p. 78) to one of these rules.

an instance of my naughty catholicity, the lukewarmness of my acceptance of the late Mr. Matthew Arnold as a critic. Well, I have explained pretty fully, in more than one place, what I think of Mr. Arnold as such, and why I think it. And, once more, I have to "grant and persist." I think Mr. Arnold's power of critical *expression*, if not quite as supreme as Mr. Murry would, I suppose, think it, absolutely of the first class. But his power of critical *judgement*—the substance instead of the form of his criticism—seems to me not only not as, to Mr. Murry, *the* best, not only often not at *its* best, but so unequal and limited as to be sometimes, in his own word of anathema, simply "capricious." And it seems to me further that this caprice was caused by his want of catholicity, and in its turn increased that want. He *did* wish to "order the universe of literature," so that it should only contain "the chief and principal things" as they seemed to his temperament. This is really "ordering" an enormous pair of what Mr. Murry good-

humouredly admits may be called "blinkers." I think that the Circumcision of a critic is the abscission of any blinkers he may be born with, and that, for his Baptism, *manet Oceanus*, and no lesser stream or sea, still less any pond or canal.

Mr. Murry referred, though only vaguely, to Plato, and the reference reminded me of a passage, not in Plato himself, but in Giordano Bruno, *Deformium animalium formae in caelo formosae sunt*.¹ Now if the critic could get access to these *formae* of the obviously beautiful, as well as to those of the apparently ugly, and store them in his memory, he might be justified in "blinkering" aught else. But alas! he cannot—as yet. And therefore all he *is* justified in doing is taking the "animals" as they come on earth, and doing his best with them *all*. He may, and should,

¹ I frankly confess that I learnt this sentence very early in my life, not from its actual author, but from that incomparable treasure-house of things borrowed and acknowledged, Southey's *Doctor*. And it sent me, before very long, to Bruno himself, and to that remarkable dialogue of Schelling's, entitled after the Nolan, which I have always thought one of the finest pieces of German prose before Schopenhauer and Nietzsche.

register excellence wherever he finds it, and his faculty of finding will be enhanced by the exercise. But he must always be prepared for a *forma*, hitherto unknown, presenting itself; for another, incrustated in or coupled to deformity, which has to be extracted and disjoined; for yet another, which perhaps he himself has misjudged and misreceived. Therefore as much catholicity as possible is the only "word of the enigma," the only clew out of the maze. The religion of literature is a sort of Pantheism. You never know where the presence of the Divine *may* show itself, though you should know where it has shown. And you must never forbid it to show itself, anyhow or anywhere.

Indeed—though I do not think that Mr. Murry himself¹ is in any danger—doctrines like his have before notoriously resulted in the commission by those who hold them of *the* Unpardonable Sin of Criticism—the inquiring of a work of

¹ Indeed I end, as I began, this little bit of controversy in the most perfectly amiable spirit.

art whether it has done, not what the artist meant it, but what the critic wanted it, to do.¹

XXVII. *Le Temps Jadis: Wallet IV.*, '80's.—The remnants which Time has left me of the '80's represent a completer decade of occupation, more thoroughly suited to taste and (to speak as a fool) capacity, than those of the last Wallet. For I own that I never *liked* schoolmastering: and though both Guernsey and Elgin provided excellent "condolences," I was horribly hard up all the time. I came back to London towards the end of '76, and shortly afterwards my mother's

¹ Apropos of Mr. Arnold, I think the old fallacy-heresy as to Poetry being "a criticism of life" seems to be raising its head again, and it may be well to give it a friendly tap on that head. In one sense all actions, functions, and features of life are "criticisms" of it; taking a constitutional and eating your dinner are tacitly, or tacitly require, such criticisms, with the conclusions that if you do not take exercise you will not live healthily, that if you do not eat you will not live at all. Further, there is of course *in poetry* sublime criticism of life in the ordinary sense, but that criticism does not make the poetry. In other words, some poetry is criticism of life and some criticism of life is poetry; but the restriction in quantification is doubly necessary. And this restriction makes the phrase, as a definition of poetry, or even a general characterisation of it, quite useless, and not improbably misleading.

death had the one consoling point about it, that it enabled me to clear off all encumbrances incurred at Oxford, in the Fortunate Isle, and among the blameless and amiable Hyperboreans. But there was only enough left of my scanty patrimony to furnish a very small house; and I remember, in the early days of my acquaintance with Lang, quite startling him by saying accidentally that I was entirely capital-less. "Dear me," he said (there was a curious and very attractive¹ vein of innocence in him), "I thought everybody had *something*." Our Lady the Press—*bonne fille* as she is with all her faults—seems to have thought that *this* body ought to have something; and, after employing me for three or four years, actually enabled me, in the year 1880—the thirty-fifth of my age and the middle of the statutory, though not in this case of the actual, road—to invest two or three hundred pounds of, I think I may say, hard- and I dare swear clean-won money.

¹ "People of Paraguay," I believe, did not always find it so, but that was because they did "continue idiots."

It is rather dreadful to think, looking back forty-four years, that at that moment one became, according to the expressed views of certain persons, occupying high as well as low places to-day, a leper—a complex and threefold-at-least leper. One not infrequently worked ten or twelve hours a day; one never quarrelled with extremely various wages, sometimes none at all; and one was established as a Capitalist Blood-sucker—I take the title from a report in the *Times* of the very day I write this (May 19, 1924). But it cannot be helped.

In this decade I began to write books—and throughout it I wrote articles—serving my editors in the most contemptibly “wage-slave” manner. It is true that I never wrote what I didn’t believe; but they were such nice¹ editors that they never asked me to do so. As I tear up or burn their letters many agreeable shadows rise

¹ One did, on the first occasion, ask me “to put my copy in an envelope and not in a halfpenny wrapper!” But, to do him justice, we were entire strangers at the time. I have tried to imagine myself doing what he deprecated—and failed.

up. They tell me they “particularly liked” this; they implore me to come and see them punctually, for they want something “very strong”; they only occasionally suggest that “something legible” would be useful. One (I can’t mention his name, because it would identify the paper which was at the moment in such a lamentable condition) begs me to send in something, because “there is some wretched stuff in the shape of reviews in type, and I should like at least to *mitigate* it with some of yours!”

Of course this is only “an almond for a parrot,” but nice parrots like nice almonds, and are grateful to the nice people who give them. *Per contra*, behaving differently from the celebrated person who “shot a publisher,” I once saved, in those merry days, an editor’s life, or at least contributed to the preservation of it. He was a young and rather amateur editor, and had a passion for another amateur occupation—yachting Corinthianly in half-decked boats. One Friday, when we had despatched the week’s work, he told

me that he was going down the river with a couple of friends for the rest of the day. I don't know what made me say it—perhaps it was because I am a “belly-god,” as an old-fashioned lady once told me—but I asked him whether he ever took provisions with him on these occasions. “Oh! no,” he said, “I'm going to have a good lunch, and I like a late supper. We shall be back in plenty of time for that.” I pointed out that the wind was behaving queerly, and, half in joke, he provided himself with one of those six-feet-long French rolls that one used to see in the neighbourhood of the Strand. I don't know where the starting-point was—I rather think Gravesend; but they were blown out to the Nore and didn't come back for thirty-six hours or more. Let us return to our documents.

A casually—or perhaps, for the cause to be now mentioned, intentionally—preserved bill, of the good old Mermaid Inn at Yeovil, enters a brandy (or whisky or whatever it was) and soda under the singularly delicate heading of “Soda,

etc., 1s. 6d.” I do not immediately remember this prudent formula elsewhere. It would have been particularly applicable at that time still farther west, in Cornwall, where they used to mix Scotch whisky and Plymouth gin for adulteration with water or “minerals.” The rather “creosoted” whisky of those days in England, and its more dulcet companion, did not get on badly together.

One could hardly have a greater contrast to this than a copy which the late Mr. Bullen sent me early of his greatest discovery, the magnificent anonymous piece, “Yet, if his Majesty our Sovereign Lord,” still, I think, unfathered. But the contrast is no discord. Nor, I think, is the following list of the members of that most delectable of dining-clubs, the Rabelais of happy memory. All health to the souls of the dead, and the bodies and souls of the living!

E. A. Abbey.

Eustace Balfour.

Lawrence Barrett.

Edward Bellamy.

G. Boughton, R.A.

D. C. Boulger.

- | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Charles Brookfield. | Prof. Fleeming Jenkin. |
| Dr. Crichton Browne. | Clarence King. |
| Gustave Brunet. | Joseph Knight. |
| B. Buisson. | Andrew Lang. |
| The Very Rev. Dr. Butcher. | Samuel Lee. |
| J. Comyns Carr. | Charles Godfrey Leland. |
| R. Copley Christie. | The Hon. J. Russell Lowell. |
| John Collier. | Norman MacColl. |
| Sir Patrick Colquhoun. | F. W. Maitland. |
| A. G. Dew-Smith. | Brander Matthews. |
| A. J. Duffield. | George Meredith. |
| G. Dumaurier. | J. E. Millais, R.A. |
| Lord Enfield. | James Cotter Morison. |
| Charles Grant. | Mowbray Morris. |
| Egmont Hake. | J. F. Moulton. |
| Charles Hallé. | William Miller Ord. |
| David Hannay. | James Payn. |
| Thomas Hardy. | Sir Frederick Pollock, Bart. |
| Bret Harte. | Frederick Pollock. |
| John Hay. | Maurice Pollock. |
| W. E. Henley. | Inglis Richmond. |
| Oliver Wendell Holmes. | George Saintsbury. |
| Lord Houghton. | George Augustus Sala. |
| W. D. Howells. | W. Baptiste Scoones. |
| Victor Hugo. | William Simpson. |
| Henry Irving. | W. F. Smith. |
| Henry James. | Herbert Stephen. |

Lawrence Alma Tadema, R.A.	Robert Wilson.	
J. L. Toole.	T. Woolner, R.A.	
Hamilton ¹ Traill.	S. G. C. Middlemore.	} <i>Hon.</i> } <i>Secs.</i>
Gordon Wigan.	Walter Besant.	
E. D. J. Wilson.	Walter Herries Pollock.	

February 1885.

In strict connection with this most agreeable society, which only fell through, I think, owing to some looseness of rules, and in particular of one (passed somehow in its later days), which appeared to me to partake of insanity,² there come other contents of the wallet—letters from that very remarkable person, the late Mr. H. W. Challis, mentioned, by name and otherwise, before. It would only be improper to say that Challis was nothing if not logical, because he was so many other things; but he *was* a logician all

¹ An odd clerical error for "Henry D." One or two of the foreign members, Victor Hugo, for instance, never dined. Longfellow, another, died soon after the formation of the Club, and I had the honour, as Chair or Vice (I think the latter), on the night when the news of his death arrived, of proposing a silent toast to his memory.

² That a person who had once been a guest might consider himself thenceforward a member. I don't think I ever went to a dinner afterwards.

through. "Nothing would give him greater pleasure than to dine with *me*." But "it was necessary that he should take me into confidence as to the particular project I so kindly suggested." The Rabelais Club was, let us put it shortly, a Rabelais Club. He, "despising and abhorring teetotalism in theory," was "an absolute teetotaler" in practice, and "fed with a simplicity to conform." "The question, therefore, was whether he, eating nothing and drinking less, would not be an intolerable nuisance and an enormous bore." So he was excused, but proved himself, in home company, the very reverse of a bore or nuisance, and endowed us with a painted *faience* plate of his own fashioning, which, after "moves" and sales and house-wrecks, still hangs opposite me at this moment, though on an alien wall.¹

¹ Challis had, like the two Mr. George Warringtons, a habit of speaking in a metaphorical or parabolic fashion, very trying to Philistia. I remember once, in one of the usual after-breakfast floating group-assemblages in quad at Merton, a representative of the sporting side of the College cruising about asking for subscriptions to a "Grind" or something of the sort. He

Does any one remember—and if so, can he or she give any further information about—a curious *In Memoriam* card—doubly black-edged all round half-inch deep—to “Honor, wife of John Bull, who died in the Transvaal of Bright’s disease, and was buried at Candahar”? I have not quoted it in full because it announces itself as copyright; but it is imprinted “H. Besley and Son, South Street, Exeter,” who possibly may still supply it. But I had forgotten its existence, and have not the least notion how it came into my possession. I am afraid the poor lady has died and been buried several times since 1881, and very recently too. But she had not such a bad time of chequered *revenge*¹ between 1914 and 1918, and I think she met my old, if never intimate, acquaintance,

accosted Challis at some distance, and then came to where I was talking to others. “Hang the fellow,” he said. “I asked him for coin and he answered, ‘The king will consider of it.’ Why couldn’t he say, ‘I’ll think of it’?” We abstained from pointing out to him that the two phrases, outwardly similar, were by no means inwardly identical.

¹ There is no such word, I know, and French is the most intolerant of all languages in the matter of *verba inusitata*. But if *provenance*, why not *revenge*?

Sir Edward Goschen ("Teg"), with a fairly cheerful countenance in the shades the other day.

It has always seemed to me rather a habit with French men of letters of distinction to acknowledge reviews of their books. There are pleasant epistles—doomed, I fear, to cremation—in this wallet from not a few of them—Gaston Paris, Emile Montégut, the formidable Ferdinand Brunetière, and others, with, for Queen of the party, the adorable Gyp! Her ladyship used to send one—on square ivory paper, with a vanilla-ice-coloured seal at the corner, coronetted and mottoed "*Et puis après*"—"Tous les remerciements de Gyp" in a beautiful large hand of violet ink, the name itself at least two inches either way.

With others of the contents the public, of course, has nothing, and would not care to have anything, to do. But there is one rather curious bundle—curious, at least, to me—which on some principles of hermeneutics might help to show that it was already on the Books of Fate that I,

an Englishman of Englishmen, should become a Scotch Professor. In 1881 the Professorship of Latin at Aberdeen was vacant, and the late Professor Minto, already enchaired there, insisted that I should go in for it, canvassed all sorts of people, political and other (it was a Crown appointment), and secured not a little help. I never got to the point of formal application, and the thing went elsewhere; but Minto took extraordinary trouble about it, and actually persuaded Mr. John (as he then was) Morley *not* to put forward a candidate he had *in petto*, and to transfer his influence, whatever it might be, to me. I had not known Minto at all when we were both at Merton, and we were hardly intimate, though very good friends, in London. But his action must have stimulated whatever goddess-delegate of Minerva presides over Scotch Universities to "think other things" fourteen years later. And twenty years later still Minto's part-successor at Aberdeen succeeded *me* at Edinburgh. Students of the Occult, please note!

XXVIII. *Casualty*.—The words “casual” and “casualty” surprise by themselves—in that great Malapropian-Smorltorkism, which is one of Dickens’s best jokes and one of his rarer profundities—a very unusual list of significations even for our gloriously inconsistent and ambiguous English language—may the inconsistency and ambiguity continue, for spelling, meaning, and everything else, *in saecula saeculorum*, to the delectation of wits and the confusion of fools! “Casualty” in particular has some very disagreeable meanings—the origin of the most disagreeable of all, the euphemism for death, being, I suppose, the very commonly, if not most commonly, adverse use of the Latin *casus*. But there is another—peculiar, I think, to Scotland—which, though agreeable to one side of the two parties concerned in it (compare Captain Dalgetty on “*caduacs* [windfalls] and *casualties*”), is by no means so to the other. I believe legislation has eased matters in this respect; but not so many years ago, if you held a house or land on feu-duty

(=ground-rent *mut. mut.*), you found yourself one fine morning requested to pay an extra two years' amount under the name of "casualty." You asked your lawyer what this meant, and learnt that your feudal superior had been born, had married, had died, had had the measles, or at any rate had gone through a period of years sufficient to give him a chance of some of these things, and therefore was entitled to come on you for support and comfort in the emergency.

Then there are others, down to the modern "casual" in the sense of "careless." But I am now thinking of something very different from these—the political-economic meaning attached to "casual" labour and the things connected with it, to all which the substantive "casualty" might be, if it never has been, very properly applied.

I had very often thought on the subject—more often, of course, during the last few years than ever before—during the half-century and

more in which I have been, not only reading debates in Parliament, but certainly "marking" them, sometimes learning from them, if occasionally finding them indigestible or not worth digesting. But Mr. Baldwin's speech of March 11 on unemployment—a speech than which you may find many more showily eloquent in those fifty or sixty years, but few more solid and statesman-like—set me thinking more furiously than ever. Is not "casual" labour the very secret and safety-valve of a safe and sound labour-system generally?

Of course Trade Unionists and Socialists—of all their thousand grades and dyes, from Mr. Macdonald's to M. Zinovieff's—hate and abhor it because it violates, on the face of it, their precious law of a fixed minimum, or rather maximum wage, work or no work, for everybody. Let us for the moment leave them joined to their idols and discuss the thing very briefly from the only point of view really worth taking—that of the interest of the Community, the thing that

Communes and Communists and Communism would destroy.

In a complicated industrial and commercial state constant employment at regular wages is impossible; while dole-supported unemployment, at anything like the wages of employment, is demoralising to begin with and ruinous at its more or less quickly arriving end. If anybody denies these two propositions it is useless to argue with him. He either cannot, or will not, see the facts of the universe and the multiplication table, and must be left to his own idols as above. But there appears to be a considerable number of persons, some of them possessed of more heart than head, more too lazy to think out or *see* out necessary things, and, one fears, rather more than a few whose interests prevent them from acknowledging—at least from loudly proclaiming—unpopular truths, and who, without exactly denying such truths, will ignore and elude them. Also, no doubt, some who are neither fools, nor intellectual sluggards, nor rascals may say, “But

are you content to contemplate these two grim verities, of limited employment and impending unemployment as, between them, they squeeze thousands or millions of your fellow-countrymen into wretched life or actual death? ”

Not in the very least content, dear Sir or Madam! It is quite true that I am not at all fired by the magnificent doctrine of the “ Right to Live ” which is so confidently proclaimed by some persons, especially when they are trying to get into Parliament, or have just returned there after eclipse. I am by no means sure that I have any *right* to live myself (*Interruption*: “ Of course you haven’t with such detestable opinions! ”), or that anybody else has, except in the sense that he has the right not to have his life violently or fraudulently taken away. As I have, I think, said elsewhere in these little books, I am much more interested in duties than in rights.

Here another interrupter, not merely petulant or foolish, may say, “ But has not the Community, in its various forms and divisions down

to the individual, duties in this matter?" Most certainly. It is the duty of the larger State to make good Poor Laws which will prevent at once starvation and idleness (*i.e.*, provide that a man shall eat if he will work and not otherwise). It is the duty of the minor communities and administrations, parishes, unions (not *trade-unions*), magistrates, etc. etc., to see that these laws are properly carried out. It is the duty of the individual to pay rates and taxes, as he can, for the carrying out of the laws: and to supplement them, to "grease the wheels," with Charity. Now of course this last word raises a howl from a certain rather too prevailing class or party. To "Labour," Charity is almost as black a beast as Capitalism: indeed if Socialism-Communism had any Hell except that which it would itself provide, and has already in some instances provided, on earth, I should imagine that a sort of reinforced *bolgia* would be provided for a charitable capitalist there. He would be a Dañado, as Ivanhoe in his Apocrypha was a

Desdichado, *Doblado*. Saner folk think more sanely; and they can have little doubt that such real social evils as prevail to-day have been largely exasperated by various hindrances thrown in the way of Charity.¹ But that is not the main subject of this paper, which is Casualty, or, in more usual phrase, Casual Labour. That our modern Labour Party objects to this is not in the faintest degree surprising. Indeed from their own point of view they are not unjustified. In the inverted pyramid of their system the lowest (become highest) and biggest stratum is to rest on the others solidly, no part or crumb of it is to be left unpropped by them as a static "right."

But leaving this catastrophic insanity aside and considering that actual state of things which is the result, not of doctrinaire experiment, but of rational and natural experience, one sees that casual labour has a most important and a really beneficial place in the scheme of providing for all—a place between regular employment and the

¹ The disuse of almshouse-founding is a tempting subject.

workhouse; a place where honest men can support themselves without the mischievous humiliation of the dole; one the existence of which avoids at once hardship and corruption, wastefulness and bankruptcy.

That place (using the singular collectively) is supplied by Casual Labour, and can practically be supplied by nothing else. For nothing else can possibly meet *all* the conditions. You want something that will at once satisfy honest want and not stimulate dishonest idleness, will feed the needs of real trade and business and not pander to the greeds of that other "Labour," falsely so called. It is really astonishing, when you look into the matter, how much good a well-regulated Casualty system can do, and how much evil it can prevent. Besides its most obvious merits—as a safety-valve to the workhouse, a reservoir for regular trade to draw on as needed, and a guard against the exactions of regular workers—it has more than one subsidiary advantage. There are natures—not by any means wholly bad natures—

to whom regular and steady work is not so much distasteful as intolerable; there are others—not to be too much indulged, but to be considered within reason—to whom the necessary confinement of the most judiciously and humanely conducted workhouse is almost as intolerable; there are other classes for whom the once longed for but now scorned Paradise of

Eight hours to work, eight hours to play,
Eight hours to sleep and eight ¹ shillings a day,

is, or should be, inaccessible for this reason or that. For all these casual employment—with “the house,” or in rare and carefully guarded cases “outdoor relief,” to fall back upon in case of there being for the moment none—is, evidently, suitable and beneficial.

That workhouses have been often mismanaged, and outdoor relief, especially under the Old Poor Law and the most modern Labour Guardianship, wantonly wasted, is of course perfectly true.

¹ Eighteen now?

That there may have been too much foundation for the exaggerated pictures of the former, for which Dickens and others are responsible, cannot be denied. But both evils are corrigible without rushing into their opposite extremes. "Labour Bureaus," as now carried on, are made useless by their connection with Trade Union restrictions. What is wanted, what already exists in the middle class, is a system where everybody is free to work at what wages he can get, and where everybody is free to get workers at what wages he can afford. Given such a system, given a plentiful supply of casual employment, released from the tyranny of Union rules; and given the revival of Charity, which cannot be expected till taxation is made reasonable; unemployment of the present kind, though it can never perhaps entirely cease, would cease to be a terror and a shame. But so long as Unions are allowed first to cause unemployment, and then to make a weapon of it, so long will it continue.

XXIX. *Forgiveness*.—One of the very few points on which, putting politics aside, I venture to disagree with Mr. Thackeray, is his curious attitude to the virtue, quality, attitude itself, or whatever you may call it, of Forgiveness. He himself, though rather apt to take offence, appears to have been in the ordinary sense, and except as regards mothers-in-law, quite a placable person. The famous just-before-death reconciliation with Dickens came pretty certainly more from his side than from the other, though Dickens was as certainly more in the wrong (neither was wholly in the right) of the original quarrel. But, all through his books, not merely does he put in the mouth of characters most resembling himself—such as the Marquis of Esmond and his representatives in the female line, the two George Warringtons—but he expresses, in his innumerable *parabases* to the novels and his independent essays, a more or less frank disclaimer of forgiveness of injuries, and something like a suggestion of its impossibility. Even Wamba's celebrated joke—one of the best

known and best of its author's—about “forgiving as a Christian” being no forgiveness at all, is a sort of sugar-plum with this bitter doctrine inside it.

Not, of course, that Thackeray recommends, or that any of his elect characters carry out, a policy of active vindictiveness, though George Warrington the younger, perhaps not quite seriously, seems once¹ to approve it. The Marquis would have been too dignified (though some of his remarks about my Lord Duke of Marlborough do something smack) and Sir George Warrington too lazy and too much of a hypochondriac to emulate that less authentic member of the aristocracy, M. le Comte de Monte-Cristo. But there is about them all this *aura* of unforgivingness. You might sometimes think that they rather despise the person who forgives. The attitude is not in the least that pointed at in two fine lines of Dryden's which everybody knows:

Forgiveness to the injured does belong,
But they ne'er pardon who have done the wrong,

¹ In the case of the great quarrel between Colonel Newcome and Barnes.

and in the two next, finer still, but very seldom quoted:

A blush remains in a forgiven face,
It bears the silent tokens of disgrace.

Thackeray and the Marquis and the baronet and the barrister do not seem to care about the penalty they thus exact by forgiving. They simply cannot—or will not—forgive.

Now this is rather odd. For as Glorious John's here really glorious and really poetic rhetoric points out by implication and almost explicitly, the not-forgiver puts himself in a position of positive inferiority to the person who has "done the wrong." Allow the creature—*any* creature—to keep up a constant raw in your own mind and heart? Sulk everlastingly—for that is what it comes to—over somebody else's misdoings? Surely not. Amnesty him—it is quite possible, as Dryden more than hints, that the benefit of that amnesty to him will be doubtful; but of the advantage to *you* there can be no doubt. You have the upper hand, the upper sphere—and rest.

But, it may be said, this advantage is nothing to an ultra-sensitive temperament, and the precedent wrong is unbearable to it. Possibly so: in that case one can only be thankful that one's temperament is not ultra-sensitive in this particular point, while hoping that it is not blunt or sluggish in others. I have enjoyed some things, in fact many things, pretty keenly, and have had my share—doubtless, deserved—of suffering. I have felt loss and defeat and such things sharply enough. But I don't think I have ever felt *rancour*.

XXX. "*Masks and Faces*." — There is no intention of violating copyright here, for the words in themselves can hardly be regarded as monopolised; while the substance is in no way play-written, though it may be in a sense dramatic.

The two most remarkable instances of change of face, amounting to the dropping of a mask or shutter, that I ever saw were curiously different.

One was a mere common incident of the street. Soon after Leicester Square had not only lost the presence of the Great Globe itself, but had been tidified up with walks and beds from the intervening wilderness of rubbish and cats, I was crossing it from north to south. On a seat by the southern gate there sat a girl, plain, shabby, and rather dirty, with a baby in her arms, her face expressionless, or nearly so. As I passed, she suddenly looked up at me with a flash of joy, tossed the baby, and cried, "It's my own!" Now if she had suggested *joint* ownership and had appealed to the policeman on duty, this conduct might require no explanation, or only one that would gratify scandal-mongers. But she did nothing of the sort, made no gesture even of mendicancy, and appeared to be quite satisfied with this utterance of felicitous possession. I suppose a really Good Samaritan would have stopped and "enquired into the circumstances." But I am afraid I am not a very Good Samaritan (though I hope I am not a very bad one), and have

always been rather shy of enquiring into other people's circumstances, unless obliged or invited to do so. And in this case there was no invitation, and no sign of any.

The other case was, as I have said, curiously different. It was when I was sitting by Lord Roberts on the only occasion when I had a long talk with him, and referred, not, I think, too maladroitly or impertinently,¹ to the unpleasant conclusion of that very unpleasant business at Manipur. "Bobs" had been wearing his usual amiable expression all dinner-time, whether we talked of boots or champagne or anything else. But at this a sort of steel shutter dropped over his face; his mouth closed with a snap as he said, "It had to be done," and I thought to myself, "Good Lord! I'm glad I'm not a culprit before *you*." Then, as quickly as it had fallen, the shutter lifted and vanished, the mouth

¹ He had, as I mentioned in the *First Scrap Book*, been good enough, for years before, to let me have some more or less confidential communications about Indian affairs to guide my journalism, so that I was not merely "butting in."

softened, and he began talking of something not too different in quite an ordinary way.

XXXI. *Old Exhibitions*.—I have not gone, and, *force majeure* withholding me, am not ever likely to go—to Wembley; but if I did I should go as a Fifty-Oner, or Relic of the Beginning, like the two-years-earlier father of the luckless Clementine. I cannot honestly say that my memories of that beginning are very numerous or very clear. I remember not so much the Kohinoor as the railed and guarded passage before it. I remember a peculiar sort of cake (which I don't think I ever tasted again) at one of the refreshment-rooms. Was the Imperial Russian Malachite furniture at '51 or '62? I remember *that*; but as it certainly extracted from me a thoroughly artistic sense of horror, uninspired by any elder, this really did me credit if I was then only six years old. I must have been something of a critic, even in the sort of ballet-skirts which small boys then wore. What became of that abomination,

I wonder? Did it go back to Russia? and has it had the degradation, excessive even for it, of supporting Bolshevik bodies?

Oddly enough, though in 1862 I was almost old enough, even according to Lady Astor, to buy a glass of beer; though I had won many prizes, written divers poems, adored several angels, and done and read all sorts of things which I remember well enough, I have by no means many memories of *it*. We lived within an easy walk, and I could have gone many, and must have gone several, times. I remember the appalling hideousness of the building itself, and the comic-pathetic anecdote of the bankrupt refreshment contractor who admitted that each of his shilling lunches could not be supplied under thirteen pence, but said on examination that he thought the numbers would make them pay.¹

¹ There is a certain resemblance to this argument in that of the Labour financier who observed that the more an employer paid his men in wages the more of his goods they would be able to buy. Both would make interesting illustrations in a little treatise on "The Economics of the Impossible" or "Living by taking in Each Other's Washing."

Otherwise the thing has left strangely little trace on a pretty good memory.

I wish some one would write a history of "The Building Plagues of Brompton and the Eruption of Exhibitions." 'Fifty-one, which indeed was not *in* Brompton, did not do much harm directly. The "Crystal Palace" looked really well where it was, and took itself clean away when it had done its business, leaving the space between Knightsbridge Barracks and the eastern end of Kensington Gardens to get green again—which it duly did. But the money raised by it burnt in the pockets of the raisers, and horrible mischief was done. The Brompton lanes were, I think, one of the most agreeable sections of the *fringe* of London. They went, which was sad; but the things that came in their place were sadder. A sort of zymotic affection seems to have come upon all the region of the '62 show, till it became frozen into the mortuaries or mausoleums of the Imperial Institute, and (I beg its pardon) the University of London, and that "Victoria and Albert" Dom-Daniel which has

replaced the unpretentious and cheerful old South Kensington "boilers."

Who remembers the enormously expensive and extremely depressing gardens on which the Horticultural Society, already possessing a charming place at Chiswick, endeavoured to ruin itself? And who the funny little exhibitions which used to start like mushrooms in different places thereabouts? One, I remember, had delightful jewels, including what was asserted to be, and I should think was, the largest and finest aquamarine in the world.¹ It was a beautiful stone of the real sea-water green—not the washy blue-white which is usual now—about as big as the small match-boxes of to-day, and well cut. They wanted £600 for it, and I would have willingly given the price if I could.

Then at the other end of this—not always, though sometimes, pleasantly—enchanted ground there was a Japanese Exhibition (I forget the

¹ Some time afterwards a jeweller, quite unconnected with the Exhibition, told me that it *was*.

year), and the rather famous "Fisheries" and others. The Fisheries was, or were, distinctly good. Fisher-girls, regular or brevet, made nets engagingly: there were exceedingly nice little barrels labelled "Delicious [*sic*] Sprats" from Norway. Best of all, large sea-crawfish (*langoustes*) sat upon their tails opposite each other, and, having no claws¹ to fight with, boxed each other's ears with their long feelers. Then came, in less or more distant sites, comparatively recent things—hybrids between Exhibitions proper and "places of amusement"—Earl's Courts, Olympias, White Cities.

And now Wembley has come, determined to be the very biggest thing of the kind after the very biggest war, and with the very biggest apparatus. I believe there is even something infinitesimal of my own in it.

Et puis après? as Madame Gyp's motto has it.²

¹ I believe honestly that it is this clawlessness which induces the vulgar to regard these excellent sea-beasts as "coarse" and inferior to lobsters. For them, perhaps, they are.

² *V. sup.*, p. 208.

XXXII. *The Articles*.—I have at least this right to speak about the Articles of the Church of England, that I learnt them by heart very early¹ in English, if not also in Latin, and could say them now, with a very little furbishing, in the former case. I am not sure that everybody who talks or writes of them is quite so familiar with them. Moreover, I have always taken a considerable interest in them; and before I had so much as heard of the *Tracts for the Times*, except in the vaguest way, had—if also in a vague way—seen how much more there is in them than meets the eye of the careless or ignorant reader, or is allowed to meet the eye of the mere partisan. There used to be a smart enough saying (I forget at the moment its author's name²) that the

¹ It was at one of the old "private adventure" preparatory schools to King's College, kept by a man who, though not a University man and not exactly a gentleman, was an uncommonly good teacher. I have a vivid memory of a sharp correction of his to one of his ushers who had said, "Higher-Romy." "'Jerome,' Sir, 'Jerome.' Don't talk rubbish," quoth old Shapcote, *more Johnsoniano*.

² Was it not Macaulay's? It sounds like a very good example of "Tom's snip-snap."

Church consisted of "those who tolerated the Articles for the sake of the Liturgy, and those who tolerated the Liturgy for the sake of the Articles." It *was* smart, but I don't know whether the author realised the whole nature of the situation. The fact is that there is not the least difficulty in "tolerating the Articles"—if you once understand them—for the soundest "Catholic" of the Anglican brand; whereas I own that if I were a "Protestant" (by which absurd and undignified name,¹ I suppose, the other people would call themselves), I might find a difficulty in stomaching the Liturgy. For this latter, in the larger and exacter senses alike, is probably the most purely and soundly *Catholic* collection of formulas, symbols, etc. etc., issued by any Church in the world.

If any one says, "But are you *fond* of the

¹ As every one knows, or should know, it occurs nowhere in the Prayer Book. I think it does in the Homilies; but the Articles themselves, with that singular wisdom which I am trying to point out, limit their commendation of the usefulness of the Homilies, to "these," that is to say "those," times.

Articles?" I should answer, "Well, yes, in a way, because they are so astonishingly *clever*." If, in the uncomfortable Lucretian fashion, he were to say, "*Te sequar*. Would you fight or die for them as you would for the Liturgy?" I should have to say, "Not exactly." But I do not think I shall be disrespectful to the memory of His Sacred Majesty Charles II. in "drawing them aside"¹ if I say the following things about them.

Their great, and almost their only, misfortune is that they, unlike the rest of the Book of Common Prayer, on the title-page of which they do not figure, are, to a large extent, of an age only and not for all time. The Declaration itself confesses this indirectly, if not directly; the Thirty-Fifth Article as to the second Book of Homilies expressly, as above noticed, conditions their goodness as being "for *these* times;" and the same limitation, if not expression, suggests itself constantly. The parts most provocative to those who do *not* understand are quite comprehensible

¹ *Vide* the Declaration before them.

as suggesting themselves in 1562. A hundred years and more later, as Charles himself and James the Second both showed in their different ways, cautions about the Church of Rome were not superfluous, nor, perhaps, are they to-day. But at what time it was necessary to point out to Englishmen "that the Churches of Jerusalem, Alexandria, and Antioch" had "erred," I do not precisely know,¹ and there are other superfluities.

Still, without Jesuitry or "drawing aside" it is permissible—and of course has often been done by really loyal Anglo-Catholics—to point out how ingeniously non-committal the Articles are when they should be,² and how unflinchingly orthodox elsewhere. The opening quintet simply adapts

¹ The Apostle was well within his rights in pointing out to the Churches of Sardis and Laodicea that their state was not gracious. But I venture to think that if even the Angel of the Church of Smyrna had lectured that Church's sisters on their "erring," that Angel would have found his present eulogy considerably chequered.

² Alas! it seems that people will never understand what ghastly mistakes rigid "Constitutions" of any kind are. And yet within a few years America has had to break her original declaration of freedom by admitting Prohibition,

the Creeds into positive form. The sections on the Scriptures are as sound as can be. No. IX., on Original Sin, of course, invites controversy when people are set on being controversial. But it is really a sort of *discussion* rather than anything else—quite interesting, full of theses for further discussion, but capable of being left entirely alone without explicit consent or dissent. So with Free Will and the rest. Unless you deliberately *posit* or *pose* the questions you need not disturb yourself about the answers. Even the “Predestination,” though it touches the most explosive of all these abstract theological matters, need provoke no actual explosion. The first sentence, by the simple safety-valves of “in Christ” and “by Christ,” would allow anybody to hold to something like Universalism. The description of the felicity of the predestinated no one can quarrel with. The second paragraph most wisely tells you that you had much better not think about

and France, in the teeth of a distinct provision, has practically deposed a President!

Predestination at all, but about Christ the Eternal Saviour. And the third contains nothing but the soundest of all possible declarations, that the promises of God are to be believed and the Will of God obeyed. I have always been fond of this Article, though it was very long to learn, because of its extraordinary ingenuity, because of the soundness of its warning as to the possible and, indeed, probable mischief of the doctrine it discusses, and because of the delightful word "wretchlessness."

Always you find the same almost uncanny skill in avoiding the traps and pits of that Valley of All Sorts of Dangerous Things—an Ecclesiastical and Theological "Written Constitution." The most interesting perhaps—in no trivial sense of that word—is the famous No. XXII. That it does not disallow Purgatory, but only "*the Romish doctrine of Purgatory*" is too clear to need argument. A person who maintains the contrary either cannot, or will not, understand the rules of Interpretation. But there is much more in it

than this. The single title of "Purgatory" contrasts remarkably with the plural and combined denunciation of a doctrine dealing not only with Purgatory, but with "Pardons, Worshipping, and Adoration, as well of Images as of Reliques, and also invocation of Saints." That is to say, these things are *taken together*. And everybody knows, or should know, that no force brought about the (rather partially) Blessed Reformation so much as the shock of disgust at what were, coarsely or not, called the back-door entrances to and exits from Purgatory, by means of Pardons and the rest. One can even afford not to lay final stress on the singular "is," though no good valuer of evidence will wholly disregard it. So that the Article leaves untouched the conception of Purgatory itself—a conception nowhere, indeed, explicitly approved in Holy Writ, but as certainly nowhere explicitly disapproved there—consonant with all worthy ideas of the combined justice and mercy of God, and far less likely to be abused than that other, of death-bed repentance, which has the in

all senses final signature of Christ Himself on the Cross.¹

It would take too much space, and overweight this miscellany with one kind of subject, to go further through the much slandered Thirty-Nine. The Prayer Book, if let alone, is perfectly sufficient without them, and by meddling with *it* we are running the risk of indirectly, or even directly, substituting something worse for *them* — a muddled code of “options” and compromises, which will have nearly all the certain dangers of an explicitly written constitution and hardly one of its very doubtful advantages. The constant saving or qualifying clauses or epithets—“wholesome and very full of comfort” of Faith; “necessarily” of Works, “for necessity of Salvation”

¹ I have always wanted to know how persons, who think that the Church of England disapproves, or even forbids, Prayers for the Dead, get over not merely the silence on the subject in this and Art. XXXI., where reference to the subject might be expected, but something that “speaks to the wise,” at any rate, in XXXI. itself—that is to say, the mention of “*the quick and the dead.*” Indeed I have never understood how any one who believes at once in Life after Death and the Efficacy of Prayer can object to such Prayers. The Parable of Dives and Lazarus, often wrenched, simply suggests, and that not finally, that all prayers of the Dead themselves may not be granted.

as to the power of the Church to ordain things; "of the Gospel" as to the greater and lesser Sacraments; "by Christ's ordinance" as to various handlings of the consecrated elements; "it was commonly said" and the plural "sacrifices of Masses" in XXXI.—are not merely admirable in literary skill, but remarkable for wisdom. It may be that this slightly forensic astuteness a little overreaches itself in touching on the Eucharist, but after all the affirmation of the Presence is complete, for you cannot "partake of" a thing that is not there.¹

As for the penultimate denunciations of Pacifism and Communism and objection to Capital Punishment, they are most "godly,

¹ As for Transubstantiation (cf. the *First Scrap Book*, p. 221), the Articlars perhaps "splutter" a little more than they need, as elsewhere. But it is certain that Christ said nothing about "substance" and nothing about transmutation of it. He said "This *is*." *How* it was, and is, He did not say: and the incident of the Capernaite *aporia* (St. John vi. 52) does not encourage would-be askers of the question. As Father Woodlock, S.J., so frankly says, the thing is "not fully intelligible." No mystery or miracle is. But as *we* "believe and take it," I should say that Consubstantiation is a fair label, if labels you must have. Meanwhile I find Capernaum has its Ghetto both in Geneva *and* in Rome.

wholesome, and necessary for *these* times," condemning "Copec" as they do by anticipation; and for my part I do most cheerfully affirm and swear that "the Bishop of Rome hath no jurisdiction in this realm of England."

XXXIII. *C'est fini de rire.* — Of course laughter is not absolutely done for and with, for in that case the world would probably have come to an end already, or at least all persons worthy to live would have been Bolshevisted or have committed suicide. They can still laugh, if rather on the wrong side of the mouth, at the "Servant when he reigneth," at the Ministers who complain of class-hatred *outside* their party, at other things of the same kind. And there are still old books, old plays, and some other old things to laugh over genuinely, though the old wine that should help the gladness is woefully scarce and dear, and threatened with complete abolition. *Mechanical* aids to merriment are indeed plentiful, like everything else mechanical: there have been

fifty acres of them at Wembley, have there not? But mechanism is never really gay.

At one and the same time during the present spring two instances, or sets of instances, presented themselves, enforcing and illustrating this doleful conclusion. There was a "row in the House" (indeed there were several), and there was an election petition. Both these things are, of course, to be regretted by the moralist, and the former has too often produced more regret from the mannerist—the choicer fellow, perhaps, of the two. But the first used sometimes to excuse itself, and the second nearly always did, by providing real *fun*. Alas! how things have changed.

It is not necessary, from the present point of view, to take notice of that special atrocity of the fuss over the Rent Bill—the rowdy attacks on the Speaker. If you let into Parliament people who do not know how to behave, you must expect faults of behaviour from them. You can't admit thistles in your garden and demand figs from them. But in actual "slanging" between honour-

able gentlemen, of whatever different degrees of honour and gentlemanliness, there may be "condolences and vails" in the shape of eloquence, humour, etc. For how many years, since one first heard or read of it, has it been an unceasing and untarnished joy to remember the magnificent denunciation, in the old Irish Parliament, of a whole most respectable family—still, one thinks, represented in public life—"from the toothless hag who is grinning in the gallery to the white-livered scoundrel who is shivering on the flure!" That *is* something to remember, something to recommend to a friend, and to repeat to yourself when you want something to cheer you. The splendid rhythm of it, the adaptation of cadence to situation, the sweep over both sexes of humankind and both parts of the building, the exactness of relation in "toothless" and "grinning," with a sufficient interval of words to make that relation something of a surprise; the alliteration of "grinning" and "gallery" with that of "scoundrel" and "shivering"; the glorious

absurdity of the whole thing, and yet, in those days, the additional touch of "shivering" and "white-livered" to intimate that the speaker was quite ready to punctuate his rhetoric with his pistol if required—all this is simply magnificent.

We turn, my brethren, to the other incident, and the sole utterance of any note in it is the description by one member of another as "You great big long drink-of-water!" There may, of course, have been some esoteric meaning in this. Even exoterically, if the accuser intended to intimate the superiority of whisky to water or the necessity of a coalition between two things, both plentiful by Clyde-side, he could not be altogether condemned. But how *flat* it is, flat as is not even every drink of water! How destitute of the slightest laughter-provoking quality! How uninteresting! For in mere abuse there is nothing interesting; it is always as dull as the ditch-variety of the injured element to which the honourable gentleman was compared.

And then the Oxford election petition! In

days of old, but recent enough for all that, the wiser mind always turned to the reports of such petitions with a cheerful certainty of amusement, combined with instruction. I, personally, being then a great walker, used to note the names of the inns and hotels mentioned in the proceedings, in case I might find myself in their neighbourhood. For the beer was quite certain to be of the first quality, and the other liquids and the food nearly so; the rooms to be clean and comfortable; the waiters serviceable, the Boots¹ omniscient, and the bar- and chamber-maids pretty. Were there not pointed out to me in the bar of the *Seven Stars* at Kennaquhair the very stools on which the purchase of the very last vote obtainable was arranged on one occasion, for no vulgar sum of money down, but for a "place" of £200 a year? Why the lucky man could only have done better by a few pounds if he had been a window-cleaner in an East London workhouse!

¹ Has this kind of Boots, once frequently worthy of his patron-saint, Mr. Weller, survived motorists?

Then, besides the innumerable good stories (of some of which Anthony Trollope availed himself) in the hearings themselves, there were endless others more privately told. The best of all—doubtless known to others, but which I have never seen in print, unless I may have already told it myself in one of the equally innumerable anonymous articles of my press-days—is the following. It came from a most amiable Parliamentary solicitor whom I met once in the Isle of Wight towards the end of the 'seventies; and is somehow associated in my mind with the extreme and ludicrous, but also pathetic horror of an innocent Cockney next day, when he found that he had to pay, separately and per dozen, for the prawns he had been devouring as though they "went with" his breakfast. The election story was as simple as it was beautiful. In an Irish borough it was the habit to give a prize of a £5 note to every voter who did his duty. But as in Hibernia, even as in Britannia, you may expect a man to do his duty but had better make sure that

he has done it before rewarding him, only *half* the note was given to each beforehand and (the miserable subterfuge of the ballot not having then been introduced) the other half after the purchased and promised deed had been actually executed. At an election, however, of particular importance (I could give the details, but why drag in names and disturb ashes?) it was found that the free and independent electors were of opinion that particular importance of votes demanded proportional increase of consideration, and stood out for "tenners" instead of fivers. They got them—at least the half-notes to which they were accustomed—of the increased value. But when, after duly voting, they applied for the complementary compliment, each man was referred to a brother voter, who already possessed the tally. There is a sort of deep peace—of gladness too profound for more than chuckles—produced by the first hearing of this story, and reproducible to no small extent by merely thinking of it, which is indescribable.

But this Oxford petition! The very place too where, after the best days of petitions were over, Sir William Vernon Harcourt once revealed to the world his employment of a *second* footman and an *under*-housemaid, an arrangement of *meiny* or *menyie* equally demonstrative of the dignity of the household and of the amiable adjustment of the sexes in its members! On this last occasion even the judges could not get up a joke. Somebody, indeed, might have suggested that the remarkable processes of adjusting discounts, etc., which were recorded, slightly resembled those of a certain Unjust Steward, when he told people to take their bills and sit down quickly and—alter them. But that is not very funny, and while the excellent Izaak long ago pronounced Scripture jests objectionable, people say now that they are unintelligible. Corrupt practices used to mean gold and beautiful, if not burial, christening things, liquor and kisses, fairy-provided picnics, and I don't know what other luxuries. They appear to consist now in walking

about laden with picture-postcards and extra copies of local newspapers. It sounds like purgatory inflicted for the practices rather than like the practices themselves. “Mais à présent,” to complete the quotation at the page top, “c’est *bien* fini de rire,” and there could hardly be a better example of the fact.

XXXIV. *A Map*.—I have never wished so much for Carlyle, often as I have wished for him, in that mood free from biliousness in which he wrote occasionally—in *Past and Present*, for instance—as in respect of some passages in that recently published *Merton Register* to which I have already referred once or twice here. The details are not abundant, but capable of being wrought up into quite a tragi-comical story of the kind that he rejoiced in, while speaking of persons so different as Abbot Samson and King Frederick, the dubiously Great.

On the 15th of November 1512 a college meeting was held to consider a petition from the

Dean of Wells *per* John Wayt, the Vice-Warden, for the loan of a map of England then in Merton library. The loan was granted on sufficiently business-like terms, the Dean lodging forty shillings, no mean sum then, as caution-money, and promising the map back, with a new copy made and delivered in addition. The Dean's name apparently at this time was William Cosyn; but whether he had anything to do with one of the greatest of Anglican divines a hundred years later necessarily *non liquet*. This was all very well, and the original register for May 11 next year records that Wayt got the map back from the Dean and the Dean got his caution-money back from Wayt. But "another hand" has indignantly annotated *mappam* "*sed jam oblitteratam quomodo non prius*" ("but now obliterated in a manner in which it was not before"), and the end of the entry runs, "but without consulting the Fellows, and to the loss of the House."¹

Then after a business entry of accounts comes,

¹ *Domus* is much more frequently used than *collegium*.

also "in another hand," but whether the same as before or not is not mentioned—a "note" of this sad matter in much fuller detail. "*Nota* that Master Wayt, who gave the aforesaid map to the Dean of Wells, in receiving that map back did not do his part nor did as he ought," the terms of compact being duly recited. For though the caution-money had been duly returned, "there is our old map in the library destroyed" (*ut patet in bibliotheca destructa est mappa nostra antiqua*), and we haven't got any new one so far! Therefore let Master Wayt be burdened and compelled to give satisfaction, more particularly (*praecipue*, a word I like) because he had let the forty shillings out of his hands without consulting the Fellows.

And this is not the last of the map; indeed we never, sad to say, hear any satisfactory last of it. But nearly a year afterwards, and more than a twelvemonth after it was lent, a "scrutiny" (a regular and pretty frequent inspection of the College property) being held, it is found that the map of England is [still] "deformed and

obliterated " by those who had had it, and Master Wayt is still " promising " only, that a new one shall be delivered " next term " by that bad Dean of Wells!

How much more alive all this is than a good deal of history-matter! And what interesting questions it suggests! What did the Dean want with that map? What was it like? How many times forty shillings would it fetch now, at Christie's or elsewhere, if it was not " deformed and obliterated " ? What observations were made on Wayt's conduct round the hearth at the various *ignes*¹ during this twelvemonth? (By the way, one does not, I think, notice references to anything like a " common-room " in this bulky and fairly miscellaneous register.²) And, finally, how are we to take the curious description of the folk at Wells (spelt "*Vellis*," Mr. Weller would be glad to know), as men *qui habuerunt eam in patriam*

¹ *V. sup.* p. 175.

² Two or three centuries later, in the very agreeable " Woodforde " Diary common-rooms are in fullest swing. When are they *first* mentioned?

gratia exemplificationis. The sense, of course, is clear enough and implies a boast of patriotic sacrifice, or at least intention, in letting Wells have the map at all. But I should have expected for this meaning “*patriæ exemplificationis gratia*” or “*in gratiam*.” However, a loyal Somersæta among my friends defends the text and objects to the Dean being called bad or wicked. But I think he must have been at least very careless: and our Vice-Warden rather loose.

XXXV. “*P.R.*”—The curiously sudden but by no means unintelligible conversion of the Liberal party, as such, to Proportional Representation amused me for private as well as public reasons. Publicly, it was a confession that, except as “odd men,” they themselves have now little chance of getting into Parliament. Privately, it so happened that, not long before, I had felt myself slipping away from my own previous fancy for *P.R.* itself. I may have told before how at a dinner, where everybody but myself was of some

political importance, that self, the most extreme Tory, and the late Lord Courtney of Penwith, the most extreme Radical, of the company, were found to be the only Proportionalists, and made to take the oath of the Brother-in-Blood on walnuts and on wine accordingly. But I had adopted the idea long before that: it was, indeed, the only notion of J. S. Mill's that ever commended itself to me when I had to read him some sixty years ago, though even in this case my reasons were by no means identical with his.

A little before we shot the first Niagara in '67 (for 1832 was only entering the cut which led to that) a person, who tried to think a little about politics, might well be concerned as to the possibility of men of some brains and some independence getting into Parliament. Putting the Irish Brigade aside and the very few pocket boroughs, such as Calne, which the Whigs had managed to keep for themselves, the House of Commons was elected by a moderate number of voters, moderately intelligent, and for the most part capable of

hanging on to one or other of two parties. Even bribery was rather, as Mr. Bright said of adulteration, "a form of competition" between these two than anything worse.¹ In these circumstances there could be little danger, and might be considerable advantage, in opening Parliament, to representatives of definite but not general opinion, by the way of *scrutin de liste* (adjusted somehow or other to English circumstances) and proportional representation. And this argument to some extent even strengthened itself with the disappearance of pocket boroughs² altogether, and the further, but still not furthest, multiplication of the electorate.

But the appearance of a definite Third Party—especially of a Third Party of the actual colour—and the practical pulling up of all sluices in respect

¹ I never could understand how people who think the vote a "right" could object to bribery. If you think it a "trust," why, that's quite another thing.

² It is hardly a paradox to say that "Old Sarum and Gatton" were really the Jachin and the Boaz of the old English constitution. They corrected the inherent evils of popular representation, they frequently harboured the best men in Parliament, and, above all, they *steadied* things.

of suffrage, have altered things very materially. "Odd men," "groups," the "cross-bench mind" are not wanted now. We want a solid party of resistance, not merely to the Bloodmen¹ of one sort, but to the Doubters of the other. Of course, it may be said, "But don't you want the minorities of right-thinkers to get *their* representation?" Certainly, if it could be done without prejudice; but I doubt if, in present circumstances, it could. "P.R.," as the Liberals evidently see, might prevent, or at any rate postpone, a second home-journey of a Certain Person with *all* of them before him (the first,² with their fathers the Whigs proper in that position, seems to have been already completed). But it will not do much good towards the accomplishing of that Third expedition, of the same kind, which must be effected before the

¹ If anybody cries, "Order! order!" let me refer him to the *History of Mansoul*, otherwise *The Holy War*, a work of much excellence and interest by the late John Bunyan.

² The object of the famous prayer :

But oh! to see the Deil gang hame
Wi' a' the Whigs before him!

millennium comes in. Meanwhile, however, I think the present operation of something like P.R. in University seats is quite worth maintaining.¹ Here you have, or ought to have, fair individual competence in voting, an opportunity for good "odd men," and a condition of things making it worth while to give every vote its chance. The state of mind which, in some cases at the last election, complained that people at Oxford and Cambridge had been allowed to vote "twice over" was sad.

XXXVI. *Seconds, Thirds, and the Latest Laputa*.—One of the few reviewers who did not like *A Second Scrap Book* quarrelled incidentally with my dwelling on the sting of a "Second." A Third (which he himself had apparently got) was, he said, worse. Well, that looks plausible, and, of course, neither of us is so well able to appreciate the

¹ Of that in Southern Ireland I have little or nothing to say. Real secrecy of voting is probably unknown there, and intimidation is very well known indeed.

exact feelings of the other as Mr. Verdant Green's bedmaker was able to appreciate his when he was married. But on the other hand I have the probable advantage, or disadvantage, of having not merely *taken* a Second, but *given* a very large number of Firsts, Seconds, and Thirds in divers Universities of England, Scotland, and Ireland. And I think I may say that I did not do this without discrimination or (except so far as the Firsts were concerned) without reluctance. I should say that the Third, though unpleasant enough in all conscience, lacks the peculiar "sting of the *miss*" which a Second inflicts. Of course, there are people who are quite happy with this last. The hero of a novel which I once reviewed said (in recommending himself, if I remember rightly, for the heroine's hand) that he, having obtained a second at Oxford, might promise himself fair success in any career he might adopt. This, indeed, was perhaps not so improbable, in the case of a gentleman obviously endowed with a good conceit of himself and a placid temperament.

But we are not all made thus. And it is the “just-not-having-got-a-first” feeling that is the devil, a devil whom one would fain escape oneself, and whom one would not let loose on others if one could help it. Of course, there are some folk who are Seconds by nature. But they don’t *think* so—at least I didn’t, I frankly confess. Now a Third, —unless he has had the misfortune to meet with Examiners who are not worth the shillings in the guineas of their fees, *or* in cases such as Newman’s of complete, though variously caused, “break-down,”—*must* be a Third by nature. And even he can always console himself by the hypothesis of the breakdown itself.

Perhaps I may add a word on the proposal, now and then renewed, to do away with Thirds. Of all the numerous or innumerable insanities connected with Education I hardly know a worse than this. One can with difficulty exhaust the list of the mischiefs it would cause, and I can see only one, and that an improbable, good. If every Examiner were competent and strong-minded,

there would be such an ocean of "gulfs" that the present rather excessive entrances for Honours *might* be checked. Short of such Draconism, the result would be that a Second would mean nothing definite at all, only that the holder was not *quite* good enough for a First or not *quite* bad enough for a gulf—say anything from 69 to 29 per cent, or from $\beta + +$ to $\gamma - -$. Which in its turn would lead to watering down the Firsts. However, as the tendency is to water "down and out" the whole education system, perhaps Seconds should be abolished too, and gulfs and everything but Firsts, so that every child of the proletariat may get one.

Between the writing of this harmless scrap, however, and the first printing thereof, there appeared something affecting examinations which can hardly be left unnoticed. Persons who interest themselves in what a seventeenth-century poet might have called, had he written to-day,

The hapless harlot Educa-ti-on,

—once in her virgin state beloved and served by noble cavaliers from Plato to Milton (himself a cavalier for *her*), now prostituted by politicians and caricatured by crotcheteers,—must, for some time past, have been a little more disturbed by a new violence put upon her under the name of “Mental Tests.” In a certain way, of course, Mental Tests would be very welcome in our present system of education. Honestly and intelligently applied, they would let x per cent of children out of school at a very early age, to be useful¹ to their country instead of a charge on it, and to relieve that country of y per cent of salaries, outlay on, and upkeep of, buildings, etc. etc. But that is not at all the object of *these* “Mental ” Tests. Up to the present time their purpose and value may be judged from an official statement quoted below: now, it seems, they are to culminate in a grand scientific mechanism for the reform, not to say the abolition, of Examination.

¹ Under, of course, the protection which Conservatives secured for them and Liberals opposed.

Examination—a far from heavenly maid, though not in such a discreditable state as that of her poor mother, Education, from one of the mishaps of whom she was born—has certainly had very few to love her and hardly a soul to praise. Even the originals of the caricatures in *The Three Clerks* can scarcely have regarded her as anything but a sort of *pis aller*,¹ useful to blunt the cant about corruption and nepotism in public appointments, and convenient for arranging *finales* in scholastic and collegiate curricula. Nor can any one who really knows anything about them deny or question the unsatisfactory points about examination. Not everybody is born examinable; still less is everybody born to examine.

I do not wish to treat disrespectfully the grey-bound booklet which, as this other booklet was passing through the press, the Board of Education issued under the rather clumsy pamphlet title, *Psychological Tests of Educable Capacity*. In

¹ Or, to keep the feminine personification, as like the women-folk whom manly strikers put in front to receive fire.

some ways it presents a most agreeable contrast to a certain notorious *Syllabus*, in which, under the same auspices, what might, by an impartial critic, be called a Pussyfoot pamphlet was issued at the national expense, and with the national imprint. Not a fault can be found with the fullness and fairness of its exposition of the history and nature of this curious extension of the University of Lagado. One sometimes almost wonders whether there was a Defoe-like traitor in the camp, who has *sournoisement* set forward the "pots of roses" discovered, the secrets of Polichinelle unveiled, the verities of M. de la Palisse enunciated by the professors of Mental Testing and their ruthless Commissioner-reporters.

In the way of details, the character of the "tests" themselves, the nature of the positive (if one dare use such a word) results attained, and the acknowledged futility of many of them, together with the hopeless discrepancies and oppositions of opinions among and between the "testers," are almost unbelievable. We learn (perhaps some

of us not for the first time) that while it was once "Lombroso all the way!" the death-blow, or something like it, has been given to the claims of anthropometric criminology (p. 3). We are honestly told (p. 6) of "the main recurrent fallacies that beset *all*¹ who attempt to apply psychological tests to practical ends." "Assumptions" are admitted (p. 11) to have, at any rate for a time, been left "wholly unverified," and the rectification of this process—or no-process—to have had mainly or purely negative results. Somebody, however, hit upon "coefficients of correlation,"² and things started cheerfully afresh. In fact "a remarkable triumph" was reached. This was, among other things, the "theory of a general ability underlying various mental activities." In other words, a boy or girl does this and that thing cleverly because he or she is clever. One had thought that men had not

¹ Italics mine.

² "A coefficient of correlation," says a note with inimitable demureness, "is a fraction or percentage expressing the amount of agreement between two series of measurements." This "eases one's mind" very much.

exactly waited for the twentieth century to achieve this remarkable triumph. But it is scarcely the first instance in which that century has *posticipated* (the word is not classical, but existed once, and is much wanted always) its grandmothers.¹

The same persons, it seems, have discovered that, besides general intelligence, there is also special, and that this special intelligence is further divided. To test this on others they employ such questions as, "Can you, with your lips open and your teeth apart, think mentally of such words as 'bubble' and 'putty'?" and inquire whether a child knows that it is a boy or a girl,—an inquiry suggesting, to others than Copeckers, awkward consequences.

No Scrap could possibly do justice to the unbelievabilities of the document; let us end

¹ This form of ancestor-worship seems to be a gratifying habit of group-psychologists. Since writing the above I have learnt some other discoveries of theirs. Trades Unionism, it seems, arises from discontent with employers; and English socialists are not, as a rule, such violent revolutionaries as Continental ones.

with two specimens of the fruit of this *soi-pensant-et-disant* fig-tree.

(1) "It is safe to predict that a child aged 5 with a mental age of 2, who thus has a mental ratio of $2/5$, will probably attain a mental age of 4 at the age of 10 and a mental age of 6 at the age of 15, on the ground that inborn intelligence does not appear to develop much after 16, and further, on the ground that such a person would never rise above the 6-year level, and would probably remain mentally defective for the rest of his life."

(2) The average mark on Group Tests of Intelligence in the whole of Rugby School at Christmas 1923 was $134\frac{1}{4}$, maximum 200.

In No. 1, carefully copied, there appears to be "something weird, something wanting," grammatically and logically. Both it and No. 2¹ must have made the celebrated Mr. Jobbles of *The Three Clerks* smile in his grave with delight.

¹ In which please note the conscientious " $\frac{1}{4}$."

There may be smiles also on some living faces, but hardly delighted ones.

The fullness and fairness of the Grey Book render it at once impossible and unnecessary to comment on it further; but I should like, in the excellent French phrase translated, to “inscribe myself in false” against the whole system which it so vividly depicts. I think I may speak, not as the scribes, on the subject—from my experience as a schoolboy, as an undergraduate, as a school-master, as an examiner, as a critic in educational matters, as a professor, and as a man who has in a way “taken notes” both of himself and of his fellows in his not short or monotonous passage through this world. The thing cannot—in any form and to any extent that would be useful—be done; at its best it would be a useless waste of time and money, at its worst productive of some mischief certainly, and probably of horrible injustice. I think a sensitive person who follows out the possible results of No. 1 above might even, instead of smiling, shudder.

XXXVII. *A Comparison*.—During the dockers' strike for *three*¹ "tanners" an hour this spring, their tribune, Mr. Bevin, was reported to have spoken of "a cold and callous square mile of City without a soul." One must make allowances for a man who has suddenly "become a name"—and a very silly name too—after rather injudicious—one must not say unjudicial—flattery from a sort of Bench. It is true that, fortunately, our actual "K.C.'s" do not often indulge in that sort of rhetoric, which is Latin rather than English. But when I read it, it was not so much of its sense and taste that I was thinking as of its foundation in any kind of fact. I have no particular interest in the City.² My father was, indeed, a "City

¹ Or was it *four*?

² I don't think I was ever in a Lombard Street "parlour" but once, and the incident was quaint. I was only escorting a lady who had some business, but the man of money looked at me and said, "Sir, you had better not commit a crime." I assured him that I was not conscious of any immediate criminal intention, and my lady asked his reasons for this no doubt sound, but rather startling remark. "Why," he said, "you'll be identified at once by that photograph." And it was true that the papers were then full of advertisements of a certain edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, in which, rather to my disgust, I figured. (More by token it was taken by flashlight in my

man " of the middle or Secretaryish class, and I used, as quite a boy, to explore courts round Cornhill and those now respectable precincts of Moorfields where Mr. Pepys (I did not then know that) had played naughty pranks two hundred years before. But ever since 1860 I have had nothing to do with it, except in the rarest and briefest visits on my own or other people's business. I have therefore no personal reason to take up the cudgels for it. But as a person fairly well acquainted with history I began to wonder whether a "History of the Charities and Benefits to Society, contributed by Members of the Mercantile Community of London, commonly called 'the City' and specially concentrated within the bounds 'Thereof,'" would bear out the eminent Docker-Dictator's remark as to coldness, callosity, and soullessness? I rather think *not*.

study, and, as I discovered too late, resulted in the covering of my tables and books with a light grey dust, requiring the most careful removal.) The business was then done, but as the banker showed us to the door he raised a warning finger and repeated, "Mind! you'll be identified anywhere!"

But old stories *are* no doubt, in the contemptuous sense, old stories to some people. And my own thoughts were not sorry to slip to a pleasant and sufficiently recent incident showing that everybody does not think like Mr. Bevin. Only a few years ago, not long before the War, I happened to be travelling (shade of Mrs. Proudie once more!) on the Sabbath from the south of England to Edinburgh. I don't know whether this sin is now facilitated, but then, unless you travelled by night, you had, by the route I took, to change at Stafford and stop at Carlisle. However, the boredom of this part of the journey was considerably relieved by the presence in the carriage of a very pretty and agreeable girl (let me quiet Mrs. P. and Mrs. G. by assuring them that her mother was also there). She seemed to be suffering in some way; and it turned out that she was a variety actress who had met with a bad accident on the stage, and had been obliged to go to a Cripples' Home for some time, leaving it much improved, though not quite herself again. And

the way that damsel talked of the founder and guardian of that Cripples' Home, the enthusiasm and the gratitude she showed, made a rather striking comment on, and comparison with, Mr. Bevin's eloquence. For I need hardly tell any one that this benefactor was the late Sir William Treloar, who not only made his money on the cold and callous steeps of Ludgate Hill, but was actually Lord Mayor of the soulless City!

XXXVIII. *Twin Cameos III.: Two Editors.*—During my twenty years of active journalism I had, of course, to do with more than two. That odd person, Dr. Appleton—the prefix Dr., which people *will* attach to one's name nowadays in the most promiscuous and unwanted manner, belonged to him properly as a member of the *practising* Faculty of Law—was my first, in respect of the *Academy*, which he founded. But I saw very little of him personally, and he died soon. The principal discharge of editorial functions that I remember on his part was his begging me to

modify and mollify *slightly* (to do him justice he wanted no discreditable "transaction") a review of *Daniel Deronda*. "You see," he said, "the *Academy's* one of the very few papers George Lewes lets her see, and it would be a pity if she were quite choked off." My second master in the Press, Mr. C. P. Scott, still lives, and long may he do so! I must have been rather a nuisance to him on the two occasions when I did, for some months, full work on the *Manchester Guardian*;¹ but he was always benevolent, and I went on reviewing for him for many years, in fact only ceasing to do so by my own request owing to pressure of different work elsewhere.² To the

¹ When "subjects" were rare, or politically impossible for me, I used to be set on the rather ghastly but far from unpleasant task of "slaying the living," *i.e.* writing obituaries or post-obituaries ready for completion when required. All papers of any position used to have, and I suppose still have, drawers full of these anticipations of Fate.

² I had an idea that a Professor of Literature, though, of course, he might write stately essays for Magazines and Reviews, should not be a regular reviewer for daily and weekly papers. I am not so sure now that this was not—besides being Quixotic and foolish—"arrogant," as the Articles say of Works of Supererogation, and even (as they say of other works) "of the nature of sin." For it seemed to refuse opportunities of keeping up with *current* literature. I still do not think that such literature

late Lord Morley of Blackburn I owe great part of my establishment on the Press, for he took, as I have recorded elsewhere, an article of mine for the *Fortnightly* at sight, and without recommendation of any kind, when I had nothing to my credit but a few reviews, chiefly of novels, and continued to ask me for contributions to that and to the *Pall Mall Gazette* as long as he edited them. But our communications were almost wholly by letter, as were those with some others.

The two of whom I propose to write in this little paper are Mr. Frank Hill of the *Daily News* and Mr. Harwood of the *Saturday Review*, for both of whom I did a good deal of work for some years—partly the same years—and both of whom I used to visit in the regular contributorial manner, frequently also working in the same room with Hill—though never with Harwood. This latter fact, trivial enough in appearance, really has something to do with their conjunction in this article.

should be directly lectured on in Universities ; but the lecturer should keep himself well aware of it.

Harwood was emphatically an editor of the older type—of one particular older type perhaps. He devoted himself entirely to his paper, with for sole home *délassement*, as far as I know, practice on the violoncello, which reminded me of his half-namesake, Mr. Harding, in Trollope's *Warden*, etc. People used scoffingly to say, and I believe it was to a certain extent true, that, as soon as one issue of the *Saturday Review* was out, he set to work on the list of "standing" articles, and made fancy programmes for next week. He certainly always began ordering fresh ones quite early in that week, which led sometimes to an awkward choice between a rather "stale" number and the not uncostly suppression of already written and printed articles. Also, though the least pretentious of mortals, in fact one of the gentlest, he always, except when it was absolutely necessary, occupied his large room in solitary state, receiving visitors, "sending for" his aides to consult them, and so forth.

I have a vivid memory of the incident, to which

I have referred once or twice already in these little books, when only chance saved the *Saturday* from the catastrophe of "Parnellism and Crime" and brought it on the *Times*. It happened, not long after I became a regular contributor to the *Review*, that the late Mr. Venables, who had been accustomed to deal with Irish affairs therein, relinquished that task, and Harwood asked me to undertake it. It happened also that his assistant and successor, my constant friend and, for more than a decade, chief, Mr. Walter Pollock, was on leave, and I was taking his place. While I was writing or proof-reading one morning in the minor editorial den, Wilson, the—by and to all old *Saturday Review* men, celebrated—factotum, who had the looks of a colonel of cavalry and the wits of a first-class man of business, came in with the usual formula, "Mr. Harwood would like to speak to you, sir."

When I went in I found him with a letter in his hand, and a solemn joy on his countenance. "Read this," he said, "it'll make good

matter for you, Saintsbury." I found that the writer, who signed himself, I *think* in full, Richard or R. Pigott, offered vague but tempting communications on the subject of the Land League and kindred matters. Now I had taken some little trouble about this Irish business, and, though I did not know much about Pigott, I did know that he was a person looked on with suspicion by both sides, one to be handled with a lengthy pair of tongs, and that preferably for the purpose of dropping him. This I told Harwood, who was, however, much disappointed, and rather angry. He said he thought it would be a great thing for the paper, and that he should accept the offer. So, having cleared my conscience by a further protest, I took my leave and went back to my proofs. But in about half an hour Wilson returned with the same formal message, but with a slight grin on his face (he always knew everything). When I got in Harwood said, "I've been thinking over it, and perhaps you're right: I'll tell the man we don't want his assistance."

Which probably, if not certainly, saved our excellent and most amiable proprietor, the Rt. Honble. Alexander James Beresford Beresford-Hope,¹ an indefinite number of "pounds," as Mr. Skimpole would say.

Frank Hill, who was a friend of Harwood's and had himself been a *Saturday* reviewer (I am glad to think that he came back to us, under Mr. Pollock's editorship and at his invitation, when, in circumstances which I need not here describe or "qualify," he left the *Daily News*), was almost as different a *man* as possible, and carried the difference into his editorship. *He* had no *sanctum* with a stately usher to guard its entrance, and he

¹ One of Mr. Disraeli's *coups de Jarnac*—adroit, effective, but not exactly fair—has probably given a vast number of persons a very *unfair* notion of Mr. Beresford-Hope. His figure was, on a smaller scale, rather Johnsonian, and his handwriting was more illegible even than mine. But he had, with some weaknesses, a good deal of ability. He played the difficult part of a proprietor who neither lets things slide nor interferes too much admirably; he was a gentleman to the backbone, and as good a fellow as I have ever known. Some people said he built too many churches: the only faults *I* found in him were that he thought too highly of mint-sauce, and that he carried his anti-Bonapartism (a thing requiring no excuse in itself) a little too far in respect of the fate of the Prince Imperial.

was fond of declaring that he regarded himself only as *primus inter pares* among us leader-writers. But he really exercised quite sufficient editorial supervision of various kinds, whereas Harwood, if he did not confine himself to enforcing a mysterious system of punctuation of his own, did not do much more to *regular* contributors. And Hill lived in the world, while Harwood, as I have already hinted, seemed to do nothing except transfer himself from his chambers and the commas to his house and the 'cello, or *vice versa*.

Hill knew many things and persons, not merely politics, literature, art, etc., but politicians, men of letters, artists, actors. It was not merely luck that brought to the *Daily News* such a peerless daily "amuser" as Lang, that had brought to it Forbes as a military correspondent. Nor was Hill in the least a party hack: he was so little of one that when his party chucked their principles overboard to take on Home Rule, and when its representatives on the property and management of the paper chucked *him*, he, I believe, simply

refused the considerable *solatium* which they offered him.

I liked Frank Hill.¹ Of the three days a week on which I used to go down to Bouverie Street in the afternoon (as I have said in these *Scraps* before, I tried night work, but couldn't stand it) one was every now and then a "blank draw." But this was not *his* fault; it simply came of his precise observance of the conscience-clause between us, that I was never to be asked to write political articles. He was said to have a bad temper—I was once witness of a row royal about something or other between him and my already mentioned friend Minto.² But the late Mr. P. W. Clayden—another interesting type of old journalism and Hill's chief *aide* for many years—told me that he had watched Hill constantly curbing this temper, and thought very highly of him for it.

¹ I liked Harwood too, and not a little. But he seemed, somehow, to belong definitely to another generation, and almost to another world.

² Minto, who was (to improve on somebody's criticism of Father Prout) "good but *thistly*," met me soon after in the Strand and said, "How's *Primus inter pares*?"

He must have had a good deal to try him, too, in Robinson the manager, who *was* something of a party hack, and had, I fancy, a good deal more power than a "manager" should have. "Editor" should mean "captain" in the good old naval sense.

Hill was never angry with me but once, when I really deserved it, for suggesting "Tit for Tat: or the Baker Baked" as title for a paragraph or note on the fate of some unlucky missionary of that surname in the Cannibal Islands. It was very bad taste in me, but I was still a young man; there had been, I think, some rather highfalutin "yarn" in the report, and I had probably been reading Sydney Smith's famous article on "the chaplain of the garrison." Otherwise we got on excellently together, and I was sorry to see no more of him after I went to Edinburgh.

XXXIX. *Taste*.—The word "taste," like many words and most people, has had its ups and downs. In another way resembling humanity, it has found prosperity not altogether good for

it. Criticism and, indeed, fashionable expression generally, in the neo-classic period, exalted a special and narrow sense of it so high that a sort of dubiety has attended it ever since. "Good" and "bad," accompanying it, do away to some extent with the unfavourable effect of this; but I question whether the phrase "Man of Taste," which was once so popular and so complimentary—though even then it lent itself a little to satire—is not still a doubtful compliment. It still carries with it too much association of the snuff-box and the clouded cane, of *talons rouges* and *ailles-de-pigeon*.

And yet I at least can think of no other word which expresses (though it hardly defines the indefinable) a distinguishing quality of the individual in matters ranging almost, if not quite, all over life. Except in pure Science (and, I believe, some mathematicians especially, as well as other men of knowledge—for I am not using "Science" in any controversial or invidious sense here—would protest against the exception), Taste is everywhere

—in Religion even to a very considerable extent; in Politics to a greater still; in Morals and Conduct almost ubiquitously; and in respect of every kind of Art, of course, quite so. It determines, by its presence or absence, by its healthy or morbid condition, the attitude of the individual to things in general and in particular. It is (adapting the formula of the only good definition of Style as *habitus orationis a cujusque natura fluens*) a habit of not merely speaking, but acting, behaving, liking, disliking—*living*, you may almost say, and sometimes, as in the leading case of Charles II., dying,—derived from, and consonant with, the nature of that individual himself. And perhaps it may be a question whether one should say that this “habit” “flows from” the nature, or that it makes that nature up, by successive exercise in occasions naturally or supernaturally provided. There are arguments for both views.

What is certain is that a very large number—probably the enormous majority—of people either do not possess the faculty of Taste at all, or

neglect the opportunity of exercising it. They eat, drink, vote, work, play, as the fashion is, or as somebody tells them. At one time everybody goes to Church at least once every Sunday, except a few who probably don't go, not because they have any reason for abstaining, but because the others do go. At another, comparatively few people go to Church, because it is out of fashion. In more frivolous matters, such as dancing and cards, even during such a fairly long but not Methuselastic or Old Parr-ish life as mine, similar variations have occurred. Will anybody pretend or contend that, in one case of a hundred or a thousand, that personal and "thought out," or at least "*felt out*," preference which we call, or at least which I am here calling, "taste" has had anything to do with the matter? I trow not.

And yet you cannot be said fully to *live* unless you exercise this Taste in almost every waking moment—on the things you drink and eat, "on the faces that you meet," on the books you read and the scripts you write, on public and private

affairs of almost every—perhaps of every—kind. Often, I suppose, it might be called Judgement; it is of course sometimes called Criticism. Very foolish folk seem to think that it in some way galls and hampers enjoyment of life, that it makes you constantly see flies in the ointment and cinders in the mashed potato. Of course, if anybody prefers ointment *with* flies and mashed potato *with* cinders, there is nothing further to be said. But to provide avoidance, as far as possible, of the evil and enjoyment, as far as possible, of the good in things of the body and things of the soul, in things of sense and things of intellect, in, as was said above, everything from religion to cookery and from politics to dress, there is nothing like the cultivation and the exercise, also as far as possible, of what has been here called Taste.

XL. *Liberalism*.—It seems not improper to follow up, however briefly, the papers on “ Idealism ” and “ Conservatism ” in this little volume with one on “ Liberalism.” The subject is of course

rather large for possible treatment here. But its patients seem to be considered by others, and even to consider themselves, so nearly *in articulo mortis* that one must make haste. Just before I wrote this Mr. Lloyd George had been giving a lively account of the sins of Conservatism and the virtues of Liberalism in the past; but in the words of one of the brightest and best known of nineteenth century epigrams, slightly altered, "one hardly goes to *him* for History."¹ And a day or two earlier Lord Grey of Fallodon—most respected of all his party—had been pointing out that you *had* to tolerate Labour, bad as it was, in a fashion, because it was unthinkable to put Conservatives in. The two persons (so different!) and their utterances (so complementary!) gave

¹ Even about the "cat-o'-nine tails of feudalism," which, it seems, from a more recent utterance, survive in the form of making people pay what, in the hope of profit, they have undertaken to pay. By the way, this poor old Feudalism is having a bad time of it just now. A little earlier somebody talked of "emerging from the *dug-outs* of feudalism" when the Labour Government came in. He probably meant "dungeons"; for when you "emerge from a dug-out" you seldom come into Realms of Bliss; but never mind.

one good occasion to think over their sect, its past, and its nature.

Lord Grey is, I suppose, one of the most Whiggish of present-day Liberals, and his argument as to the impossibility of putting in Conservatives is interesting, because it is the old "buff and blue" principle, maintained and enunciated with the frankest innocence. Even if the Whig by some "temporary supremacy of the Devil" can't be kept in, the Tory must be kept out. That is pure Whiggism, and indeed at one time was the sole commandment, article of faith, motto, shibboleth, or anything else of the kind you like, which Whiggery insisted on—assisted as it was by the Jacobite and Hanoverian struggle and the ghost thereof—in the eighteenth century. The French Revolution, of course, upset and "criss-crossed" parties, giving rise also to the new "Radical" one, which has gradually developed into, or rather returned to its first works in, "Labour." But "Liberalism," properly or improperly so called, hardly came into existence

till after the First Reform Bill, when too many of the newly enfranchised Middle Class were fools enough to think they saw damage to themselves in Toryism, fools enough not to perceive what Radicalism must come to, but not quite fools enough not to be aware that the older Whiggism saw all things in Whigs, and was not anxious to admit everybody to that beatific condition of being visible. Accordingly, Whiggism as such had to see that it was time for it, if not exactly to "go," to open its doors, give up its privileges, and, so to speak, "come down." Indeed, it had seen this before Reform itself, and Reform was a result of the seeing, though it hastened the necessity of opening eyes or doors still wider.

For the new Anti-Tory party, as for the old, the one object was Place; but new means of gaining it were necessary. As Lord (then Mr.) Tennyson was so beautifully to observe a little later of something else, it was

An infant crying for the light [*of Downing Street*]
And with no language but a cry.

And it has never had any language but "cries" ever since—Peace, Retrenchment, and Reform; Free Trade,¹ Disestablishment, Bulgarian Atrocities, Home Rule, Chinese Slavery, Methods of Barbarism, Mending or Ending the House of Lords, Ninepence for Fourpence, etc. etc. etc. And now the stock of cries is getting low, and that abominable Labour is taking them out of the Liberal mouth, and nevertheless has to be kept in office in order to keep the Tories out!

Hard indeed must be the heart which will not admit the other hardness of the Liberal case! And there is about it one exemplification of the curious but constant see-saw or zigzag of Time and Fate which I have never seen noticed. The Whigs got their inheritance from a party more violent than themselves; the Liberals are losing theirs to another party also of extremer character. So that the lesson is useful. The Whigs were in their way a party of maintenance—their destructive business had been done for them beforehand,

¹ *V. inf.* on "Great is Diana," p. 329.

and when, at the French Revolution, some of them would have destroyed more, they collapsed. The Liberals have always destroyed; there is not really a constructive measure to their credit on the Statute Book.¹ And now that a more vigorous destructive agency, young, ready, strong, quite unscrupulous, presents itself, why should Anybody employ these poor old Liberals?

XLI. *Twin Cameos IV.: Two Satires.*—That it is easier for a man to make a fool of another man than to make him make a fool of himself will probably be granted. Both, no doubt, are equally possible and indeed equally easy for women²—in their eternal and proper capacity and adaptability as women, not as viragiously transmogrified in

¹ Some people, I believe, would say, "Law Reform and Codification?" But that, in so far as it is good, has been by no means exclusively Liberal work; and it is outside Politics proper, of which I am speaking.

² "Oh," said a lady once, speaking of her sister in that "mixed mode" which is characteristic of sisterli- and brotherliness, "—— can make a fool of any man, married or single." "You mean," said a gentleman-like corrector (Cowley's phrase), "that there's no man, married or single, such a fool as not to let her do it?"

some modern ways. But that is another matter. I am now speaking of regular literary satire in speech or writing, and more particularly of two of the oldest (as far as the modern world is concerned) and most perfect examples of the *more* difficult achievement. They are both famous enough in general literary history, and almost famous in history not purely literary, for both had great social, and one had great political, influence. But I am not sure that every gentleman's library contains them nowadays, and I am pretty sure that not every gentleman has read them. One came at the beginning of the great European, as distinguished from Italian, Renaissance; the other at its end. The first is the *Epistolae Obscurorum Virorum*, the second the *Satire Ménippée*.

Of the numerous important and involved circumstances of the two it were of course impossible to speak much here.¹ But as happens,

¹ These will be found, briefly but I think sufficiently put, for the *Epistolae* in my *Earlier Renaissance* (Blackwood, 1901): for the *Ménippée* in Mr. Hannay's *Later Renaissance* in the same series. But research into them might be indefinitely extended.

far more often than it is perhaps etiquette to allow, that matters not so very much. Any gentleman (to revert to the formula) has only to remember that the *Epistolae* were written to defend the New Learning and attack¹ the old Scholasticism, which, great as it had been, was now in mere decay and rottenness; the *Ménippée* to counter-mine the corrupt and unpatriotic machinations of the Ligue against Henry of Navarre. It is the way in which the fight is fought in each case, not the immediate causes, objects, and so forth, of the war, to which we may here give a page or two. And it may perhaps add a little interest to remind readers that this peculiar art of making people make fools of *themselves* has a third example of the very first class, but in verse, not prose, and in our own language, that is to say, *Hudibras*. There is little doubt that Butler took hints from the *Ménippée*, and though I do not remember any direct evidence on the point, I should think he

¹ How I used to wish, in the fight for Greek a few years ago against not Scholastic, but purely Ignorantist foes, for a few Epistolers like these!

knew the *Epistolae*, for he was a very wide student, and the mock-scholastic style was, in a way, his own.

But *Hudibras* ought to need no recommendation to any educated Englishman, though I fear it does need one to a good many; the others may claim it. I know, indeed, one Englishman, Sir Frederick Pollock—himself not Obscurus, but Clarus in many ways—who can write dog-Latin with the best or worst of the flock of Ortuinus Gratius, as well as *not* dog-Latin with any Ciceronian of their time. And I would have backed the late W. P. Ker to do a subsidiary chapter on something Menippian that Le Roy and Pithou and their fellows—jealous as the French are of foreign meddling with their language—would hardly have quarrelled with. But I doubt whether many of us read either book, though yet a third friend of mine, Mr. Allen of Merton, knows the *Epistolae* and all its precincts and atmosphere a great deal better than I do. Both must be read in their original languages,

for though there is plenty of fun and (for those who can extract it) wisdom in the matter, it is the manner which is the really precious thing in both.

I suppose the *Obscuri* are not for everybody, even that smaller "everybody" which is competent to enjoy them. Indeed I have known persons, qualified enough, who have looked coldly on enthusiasm for them. The whole collection is very large (eight hundred pages and more in the small but closely printed edition mentioned below),¹ while the last half of it—the so-called *Defensio Pepericorni* (Pfefferkorn, the unlucky

¹ There are divers learned editions in which the *Obscuri* deliver themselves; but those who do not want introductions, discussions, and notes should procure a charming two-volume form (Leipzig, 1869) (from the Teubner Press, but in much smaller and finer page and type than those of the ordinary *Bibliotheca Teubneriana*), which has enriched my library for the last forty years and been saved from its wreck. As for the *Ménippée*, buyers should be careful. There are several modern reprints, one of which (Librairie des Bibliophiles, *n.d.*, as too usual in French) was procured for me the other day by an angel to supply the loss of another (if not two others) which I once had. But there is a skit-imitation and adaptation to contemporary French politics, published in the eighteen-seventies with the original title, which may deceive, and receive unholy language from, those who are not angels.

converted Jew, who was almost more a butt of the Reuchlin party than Ortuinus himself), and the *Lamentations* of the lampooned obscurantists—is by no means so amusing as the rest. Even the third “volume” of the *Epistolae* proper is (I shudder in saying it here) not entirely free from the malediction popularly attributed to sequels. But this third volume is very short and the two earlier ones are long and delightful, while there is a set-to between Reuchlin and Erasmus and Le Fèvre d’Étaples on the one side, and Ortuinus and two other “Obscures” on the other, which deserves its title of *Dialogus Novus et Mire Festivus*.

Some of the best of the fun is here due to the contrast of the pure Latin, which the three defenders of the New Learning aim at, and the jargon of the others. I own myself, childish as it may be, to be even now compelled to laughter by such things as the intrusion into Latin of the modern indefinite article (*qui fuit unus principalis vir*) and the sublimely Fulgentian derivation of

*Ars (dicitur a graeco artos id est panis, quia omnes qui sciunt artem aliquam possunt acquirere panem et victum et amictum).*¹

But the spirit and virtue of the whole thing lie in the wonderful skill with which Crotus Rubianus and his fellows caricatured, for their purpose of making their enemies make themselves absurd, that curious kind of simplicity—tending to boorishness and stupidity, no doubt, in one way, but when saved from these not always positively disagreeable—which characterised the German temperament, till it was corrupted to actual brutality by the intoxication of the successes of 1870. Always silly, often naughty, and sometimes nasty, as are these poor people whom Reuchlin (*Diabolus confundat eum!* as they say) made so uncomfortable, one can't be very angry or much disgusted with them. They have some of the characteristics of an inferior Samuel Pepys. I love

¹ Alternative derivations are kindly offered—to those who may not like this—from *arcus*, *arx*, and *artus* or *articulus*, with elucidatory arguments similar to the above.

to think of the man who objected to membership of more than one University on the part of an individual because, though a body may have divers members, members *can't* have more than one body; and of him who saw the Pope's elephant, a wonderful beast who had a nose as long as a man, who said, "*Bar! bar! bar!*" and who, alas, died, though His Holiness paid 500, yes! five hundred, pounds of gold to doctors to cure him. And the poor fellows *are* "roasted to a turn," as the old phrase goes.

The *Ménippée*, it must be admitted, aims higher and strikes harder, though it is an example of the same *general* kind of satire, proceeding by self-stultification of the victims. Indeed these victims required, specifically, different treatment. The poor Dutch and German dominies and parsons—who had never read Virgil or Cicero, who were occasionally forgetful of their vows in respect of details, but who at least sometimes had the grace to wish to engage an *old* cook that there might be no

temptation—were a very different folk from the factions that tore France to pieces between them, the best part of a century later. Between, in another sense, the extremes of these there was very little to choose. The Catholics were perhaps a trifle the more unpatriotic, and the Huguenots¹ a trifle the more brutal. It was against the tendencies of the former,—the “Catholicon d’Espagne,” or Spanish nostrum relied on by the Ligue,—that the Politiques or Trimmers launched this (as an old friend of my own father’s, Philarète Chasles, called it nearly a hundred years ago in an often quoted phrase) “pamphlet, comedy and *coup d’État* at once.” That it did about as much in the first, and even in the last, of these three lines as anything of the kind ever has done, or perhaps

¹ The offensiveness of the extremer Protestant parties, throughout the Reformation times, is odd. I have sometimes thought that though, bad as were our Puritans, by far the greater part of the nation escaped their badness, and even they were hardly as bad as the Huguenots and the Covenanters—our escape was partly due to the national antipathies towards France and Scotland. On the other hand, the same inexorable Muse of History (the only Muse that never lies) which suggested this, suggests also that this antipathy may have exasperated at least the Covenanters in *their* evil ways, because their “old enemies of England” were Prelatic.

ever can do, is pretty certain; but we are chiefly concerned here with the comedy.

This is to a small, but only a small, extent Rabelaisian, as indeed it was certain to be; and the dashes of Master Francis are for the most part confined to what may be called the framework of the piece—the printer's addresses; the account of the virtues of the Spanish Catholicon or panacea for the woes of France; the description of the procession to, and the decorations of, the Assembly of the States of Paris to decide on the election of a King of France. These are full of good touches,¹ but the gist and pith of the piece lie in the speeches of the principal representatives. They are Seven—like the family of Wordsworth's little girl—but there is a remarkable difference,

¹ One of the best is the distribution, left and right, of the ambassadors of Foreign Powers. The left bench is for, and is occupied by, Spain, Naples, Sicily, Lorraine, and the County of Burgundy (meaning, in reality, nothing but Spain and the Guises), the other is meant for England, Portugal, Venice, the Lords Counts and Princes of Germany, Switzerland and Italy (*i.e.*, the whole of civilised Europe outside Spain and France, "qui font défaut," "who aren't there." I know political satire pretty well, but I know few better things in it than those three words.

both in tone and substance, between the "harangues," as they are called, of the first six and the harangue of the seventh.

First comes the Lieutenant of the Kingdom, Mayenne, the worst of all the Guises; then the Legate; then the Cardinal de Pel[le]vé; then the Archbishop of Lyons; then Roze, the Rector of the University; then the nominal speaker for the Ligue nobles, the Sieur des Rieux, a ruffian and brigand of no lineage, who was soon afterwards most appropriately hanged. All these speak exactly as if they were in the Palace of Truth, but are made by the art of the writers—Le Roy, Pithou, and others—to "do it naturally," after a really marvellous fashion.

Mayenne, in a beautiful exordium, begs his hearers to be witness that ever since he took up arms for the Holy Ligue, he has invariably preferred his own interests to those of God, who is quite able to get on without him. The Legate, in a medley of Italian and Latin, and the Cardinal, in one of Latin and French, plead, the Legate for

the Infanta Isabel if possible, but in any case for no peace or truce to give quiet to France; the Cardinal for one or other of the Guises, and for killing and burning every partisan of the Béarnais. "M. de Lyon" is dithyrambic about Jacques Clément (the murderer of Henri Trois), and points out to the various Orders, especially the Nobles and the Clergy, that they have the upper hand now and had better keep it. Roze the Rector (who seems to have been charitably regarded as a kind of lunatic) contrasts the former condition of the University,—when troublesome young "regents" tried to show that they knew more Greek and Latin than others, and there were pedants about like Ramus, Gallandius and Turnebus—with its present happy state, when the lecture-rooms are used for cow-stalls and poultry-houses. The brigand Rieux declares readiness for himself, and enjoins it on others, to kill and plunder parents, friends, and neighbours, to abolish the Salic Law, chuck the "furred hoods" of the Parlement who maintain it into the river, and so

forth. It is all done without a false stitch or note—Lucian himself could hardly have done it better.

And then comes the surprise-piece. There rises, in due last turn, the spokesman of the *Tiers État*, M. D'Aubray. And he takes not merely a different side, but a wholly different tone, setting forth with passionate seriousness the woes of France, the fatal character of the Ligue policy, and the exclusive possession, on the part of Henry of Navarre, of all chance of setting things right.

Optima sed longissima, some old critical reader is said to have marginalled this. It *is* long, rather longer than all the other six put together. But there was a great deal to say, and it is said with an admirable combination of cool but not chilly logic, and warm but not hectic rhetoric. The great attraction of it, for a lover of literature, is its contrast with the others, which is not injured by the length, but, on the contrary, maintained throughout. After the laughing but pitiless irony which has at once covered and exposed the scoundrelism of the enemy, this plain and direct

offensive-defensive has a sort of refreshing shock. It is not without its own humorous touches (sixteenth-century French had plenty of humour), as when D'Aubray admits in the Béarnais "quelque inclination à Aymer les choses belles"; but the bent of it is honest "over the face and eyes" hitting, and it ends with a forcible "Get you out" to Lieutenant and Legate and Cardinal, to Spanish agents who make Frenchmen kill each other like gladiators for their own amusement, to the mob of Lorraine princes who suck the blood of Frenchmen. "*We* are Frenchmen ourselves, and we will give our lives and our goods to help our King, our good King, the only true King of France."

So the Assembly, without coming to a vote, breaks up hurriedly, and disperses abashed and silent.

It must be twenty years and more, before the angelic recovery, since I last read the *Ménippée*, after being very familiar with it for at least as long a time earlier. Renewals of acquaintance under these circumstances are not always safe.

You cry in the old song-words, "Holla! my Fancy," and she doesn't answer. But I have just re-read it with quite as much relish as when I read it for the very first time. And I think I may say, "Let him who aspires to the greater political journalism give at least some of his days and nights to the reading of the *Ménippée*."

XLII. *Le Temps Jadis: Wallet V., 90's and Later.*—As the time of these matters gets less old its yield is less fructuous, partly as being more kittle to deal with. The "Phantasms of the Living," that appear more and more, forbid themselves to be indecently vulgarised, or at best vulgated; and the Documents of the Dead request commission to fragments, or the fire, or their families. A few things from letters, some older than this decade, which have strayed into the wallet, and some even later than its close, may be of interest to the reader, as they certainly are to the writer. There is a very early letter from an old "comrade of college" mentioning that "Bob

Reid " (as he was to my friend *quâ* school-fellow, and even to me as an acquaintance) was, in the fourth year after his "call," making £2000 *per annum*, to the wonder (if nothing else) of his contemporaries at the Bar. There is one from the late Lord Lytton, written from Longleat, and saying, among other things, that he had been busy all day over those then inedited Prior MSS., which we have since enjoyed by the kindness of the Marquis of Bath, the labours of my friend the late Mr. Waller, and the aid of the Cambridge University Press.¹ There are repeated invitations to Rowfant (which, by some equally repeated ill-luck, never could be accepted) diversified by requests from its owner to be told whether a reputed early Villon at Paris was worth buying, and expressions of gratification at my rejoicing in that piece of *Patchwork* called "My Guardian Angel," for which I have always had a passion.

¹ "Owen Meredith" does not specifically mention "Jinny the Just," who, indeed, had not then had that title given to her. But she must have been a joy to him.

There are Austin Dobsons "before letters" of the copper-plate kind, and written in ordinary current hand. There is one from my old Head, Mr. Oates (*v. sup.*, pp. 91-95), containing information as to his Buckinghamshire living, which had been for some forty years in the hands of a man either absent from illness, or stone-deaf and impeded in speech when present; and where, of fifty-five Sunday school children, not one had heard of Balaam. So he told them the story, and very well he would have done it. You can't learn that story too early, for future Uses of Delight, Warning, and Instruction in Human Nature.

Here are some interesting wine-prices "from a Paris Guide published in 1803," but apparently copied in translation from the actual wine-list of a restaurant in Paris itself:

RED WINES

				l.	sl.
Wine of Macon	.	.	.	1	10
Ordinary Burgundy	.	.	.	1	10

	l.	sl.
Ordinary Wine of Beaune . . .	2	0
Wine of Migraine . . .	2	10
„ „ La Chenette . . .	2	10
„ „ Beaune, first quality . . .	3	0
„ „ Volnay . . .	4	0
„ „ Pomard . . .	4	0
„ „ Nuits . . .	4	0
„ „ St. George . . .	5	0
„ „ Chambertin . . .	5	0
„ „ Richebour . . .	5	0
„ „ Vougeos . . .	5	0
„ „ Bordeaux medoc, prime quality	7	0
„ „ Bordeaux (claret) „ „	7	0
„ „ Romanée Conti . . .	6	0
„ „ Hermitage . . .	5	0
„ „ Bordeaux Aubrion . . .	4	0
„ „ Bordeaux Lafite . . .	5	0
„ „ Red Champagne . . .	6	0
Good Old Port . . .	5	0

WHITE WINES

Wine of Chably . . .	2	0
„ „ Pouly . . .	2	0
„ „ Mulseaux . . .	4	0
„ „ Morachée . . .	5	0

	L.	sl.
Wine of Hermitage	5	0
„ „ Grave	5	0
„ „ Sauterne	5	0
„ „ Barnac	5	0
„ „ Small Champagne . . .	3	10
„ „ Rose-colour Champagne .	5	10
„ „ Sparkling Champagne . .	5	10
„ „ Sillery Champagne . . .	6	0

These come from a letter of George Augustus Sala, *à propos* of the old discussion of the equivalence of “claret” and “clairet.” The mispellings (which that great authority, M. André Simon, has declared, I think, to be not uncommon even in France to-day, and which have always been prevalent in England, but which, of course, were not Mr. Sala’s own) are sometimes curiously phonetic, as in “Aubrion.”¹ “Lafite,” for a wonder, is right, and the omission of the *g* in “Richebour” and the substitution of *s* in

¹ I have had occasion before now to “scrap” various mis-handlings of this great wine’s name. And we have also had to notice, before, the comparative modernness of Champagne as *exclusively* “sparkling.” Here, it will be observed, only one kind out of four is announced as such.

“Vougeos” not surprising. But what is, or was, “La Chenette”? And though I cannot say I have never drunk “Wine of Migraine,” I shouldn’t have expected it to be so frankly advertised as such. In the white list “Barnac” is probably a mere clerical error, and “Chably” and “Pouly” phoneticisms as before. “Mora-chée” for “Montrachet” looks as if it had been taken down from the lips of a hurried and not too clear-spoken waiter; but “Mulseaux” for “Meursault” suggests a slight indulgence in the excellent liquid itself. These white Burgundies are *very* treacherous. Perhaps it is just, if only just, desirable to add that “l” = *livres* and “sl” “*sols*” or “*sous*.”

Letters written to newspapers or to those in constant or temporary charge of them, and not intended for publication, are of course fiduciary in more senses and degrees than one. But especially when they are anonymous, and when Time and Change have happened to them, they

may, I think, sometimes be published.¹ The following touches a point which has often been argued, and which, if it concerns the sensitiveness of fewer persons than it once did, is perhaps not the less interesting for that:

October 7th, 1892.

DEAR MR. SATURDAY REVIEWER—I am sure you will not mind a “Constant Reader” asking you, with much respect, to amend something in your manner of writing which causes a great deal of offence to old-fashioned people.

I mean the habit of using sacred phrases—quotations from the Bible or from hymns—to give piquancy to your columns. They do not need it.

There was a bad instance on the 17th ult., when the words which St. John applies to the Eternal Word of God, “The Light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not” were applied by you jocosely to some one: only you changed “comprehended” into “understood,” with a reminiscence of the Prayer Book.

There is so much cant and false religiosity in the present day that it is a pity an over-done cynicism should

¹ As to another possible point of *fides*, I may perhaps say, or rather repeat, that full discretion on this point was allowed me, by proprietor and editor, when the paper changed hands in 1894. I do not think that I have, here or anywhere, abused it.

give any excuse for it. Liberals make a great show of "lofty morality," "righteousness," and the rest. Is it well that the public should suppose we Tories are incapable of any "high seriousness"?

The *Saturday Review* supplies a healthy antidote to the unhealthy chatter of a flabby age. But how much more good it might do if the "man of the world" and the "funny man," who write it so ably, did not give people the notion that Tories have no ideals and no passionate regrets.

With many apologies, I am, Your very faithful
Servant, A CHURCHMAN.

I think I was myself the culprit, and so came into possession of the letter, the last sentence of which, as to Tories, I see I have endorsed long ago, and can re-endorse even more sincerely now, and with heavier italics "Oh, *haven't* they!"

But to the main question. *Is* this use of Scripture irreverent and in bad taste? The feeling that it is cannot but be respected; yet is that not rather akin to the old "correct" objection to Shakespeare, that he mixed tragedy and farce in a shocking manner? Does not the use of Scripture

facts and phrases to point argument and even jest, argue familiarity in the good sense as well as in the bad? Further, does not that use imply the same familiarity, in the good sense, on the part of readers—an implication *now*, perhaps, less justified than it was thirty years ago, but one that assumes a not unhealthy state of things? If it implied, on the writer's part, any scorn of the phrases themselves, their context, or their source, it would be very different. But, on the contrary, the use is—it would be absurd to say a compliment to, but—an acknowledgment of the pith and weight and sharpness of the thought, the beauty of the imagery, the appropriateness of the language, even, in not a few cases, the supreme knowledge of human nature and adaptability to all the chances and changes of its fate. I have not the least notion who my rebuker was, and I am sure he was an excellent person. But though I repent some things I have said and done (as who but hopeless fools and Pharisees at once does not?), I don't think I repent the habit he blamed me for.

One more curious epistle I must, I think, quote from and comment upon, though it is over the limit of the last century, because, beyond all doubt, it "voices," as they say, a complaint too often—and in my case, I fear, always—justified. It was an anonymous wail, from an Edinburgh compositor, against myself and Lang for our abominable writing. What business had I to be a Professor of English if I couldn't write it [there was, perhaps, a little "sophistry of ambiguity" here, though some of my enemies would not grant that], or President [as I was then] of the English Association, if I didn't insist on others writing it? Queen Victoria and Princess Beatrice wrote decent hands and were "friends to printers"; why weren't *we*? In one respect I was better than Lang, for I didn't write "insulting marginal notes" on printers' slips as he did. But why did I make "dreadful insertions" of script in my typewriting? And so forth.

Now if my denouncer had given me his name and address I should have pleaded guilty "with

extenuating circumstances," such as a single-jointed thumb, and an inability to typewrite with more than one finger of one, and that the left, hand. But I wonder what Lang's "insulting marginal notes" were like? There are, I believe, materials for a history of this kind of petulance. Baudelaire, for instance, is said to have been in the habit of annotating "Cette sacrée Élodie!¹ elle n'en fait jamais d'autres!" For my part, at the very beginning of my dealings with the press, and when I was still little more than an amateur, I had a lesson in this part of the matter. I *did* make a flippant remark on some query of a "reader" in regard, I think, to a *Britannica* article, and received in return a reply—perfectly polite and, indeed, much more respectful than I deserved—which put me off that game for good, I hope. Still, it is rather awful to think that the Recording Angel may have "taken down" my

¹ I quote from memory, but think it was Élodie; it was certainly a feminine name. I gather that French correctors and correctresses of the press *sign*, as ours sometimes, but not invariably, do.

poor correspondent’s words, “If there are any names cursed and dreaded by printers, it is those of Andrew Lang and Professor Saintsbury,” and that, when the long-suffering compositors remember Burns’s “Man’s inhumanity to man,” they at once “think of those dreaded names.” But if (as he may well be, for the letter is not yet twenty years old) he is still alive, I hope he will accept my apologies, which, I fear, are even more due to my present victims. It may comfort him a little to know that—putting aside the palmary instance of Carlyle, from whom, as is well known, an older Edinburgh “comp.” fled to London, and being pursued by the Sage there, expired, or something like it—there have been worse people in this way than Lang and myself. The late Rt. Honble. A. J. B. Beresford-Hope could give me in the scrawly way, and the late Rev. H. N. Oxenham could give Lang in the spidery, fifty and beat us!

XLIII. “*Why Can’t I . . . ?*”—Some little time ago a person who wished to eat but did not

wish to work, and who, more unlucky than many of his likes, got hauled up before the magistrates of a certain City of the West, took and maintained a line of defence which deserved commendation for frankness, and for which an advocate might further plead that it seems to represent a very popular sentiment at this time of day.

“ Why can’t I have my pound-a-week? ” he said, and abode in the breeches of that plaintive question. The sum is a little interesting to that cold and callous race, the students of history, for it is not so many years since “ Pound-a-week ” was a playful, but not in the least sarcastic, general term for men who did miscellaneous indoor and outdoor work, without board and lodgings, in London and other large towns. *Now*, the “ work ” — an unimportant item — is omitted. This, however, is a mere detail. The importance and the interest of the incident lie in the “ my.” “ Why can’t *I* have *my* pound-a-week? ” says this casual—I forget what was the particular work which he was supposed not to do. “ Why can’t

they have *their* four pounds a week?" say the Poplar guardians of their window-cleaners. "Why can't *we* have *our* up-to-ten pounds a week?" say the engine-drivers, etc. etc.

The answer involves several considerations, each and all of which seem to be ignored by too many people to-day. One of these considerations has a name, "The Standard of Living"; another is nameless "for short," but most important to consider. It may be taken first as such, as well as because the *standard* of living, it must be granted, does not very much concern our pound-a-week friend. He wants to eat without working: but he does not apparently want to eat turtle with gold spoons and to take the children every day to "the pictures."

This "other" is the prevalence—almost the universal prevalence—in the Socialist "proletariat" and the honester portions of the Socialist *intelligentsia*—of the astounding delusion that somewhere or other there is an inexhaustible spring, or Fortunatus's purse, out of which everybody can

have "his" pound, "his" four pound, "his" ten pound a week without anybody being the worse for it, and *in saecula saeculorum*. Often, of course, the "somewhere or other" is particularised in thought, and sometimes the thought gets rather indiscreet utterance. "To take the opportunity of living from the rich and give it to the poor" was one of the Clydesideisms, was it not? Now a person "from" whom the "opportunity of living" is "taken" would seem almost likely to cease to live, so that there is just a suspicion of the *lanterne* about it. But possibly the reporter over-reported, or (more probably still) the speaker, either from muddlement of mind or insufficient command of the English language, said what he did not quite mean. He (to guess not quite improbably, but most charitably) may have meant that you were to take from the rich *as much of* their livelihoods as would make livelihoods for the poor.

The idea, however, that the poor can cut and come again at the rich is fortunately, or unfortun-

ately—the latter certainly if there is any danger of its being put in practice—a most delusive one. I used to think, as, I daresay, many other ingenious youths have done, that the story of the perambulating larders of the Abyssinians was somehow not satisfactory. You *might*, no doubt, cut a steak or two from an attendant cow if you didn’t mind its being *bien saignant* in more than the usual culinary sense, and were yourself fairly strong-minded and -stomached. But it couldn’t go on long, and then where would you be? So if you made the aristocracy, the plutocracy, and the still more abominable *bourgeoisie* not mere milch-but meat-cows to the “brave proletaires” (I believe that is the proper expression?), the meat wouldn’t last long, and there would be no fresh meat produced. I suppose that even the aristocrats and the plutocrats and the *bourgeois* would be allowed (though Bolshevik practice makes this dubious) *their* pound-a-week at least, while I understand that persons with families are to have nearer the four or even the ten pounds. This,

when all the capital is levied; no interest allowed on any "stocking"; work, such as is possible without capital, cut down to a minimum and wages pushed up to a maximum, will find some difficulty in continuing. Indeed, to degrade to the situation the loveliest of all ballads:

When men come up through Glasgow town,
'Twill be a ghastly sight to see,
With all their pounds-a-week fall'n due,
And never a cent in the Treasurie!

The Standard of Living question, as no such mixture of folly and crime is directly concerned in it, wants more delicate handling. I grudge no one his turtle or his gold spoon. I have myself eaten turtle several times (it is good, but not so superlatively good), and though I never had a gold spoon to eat it with, I have had a few silver-gilt¹ ones, which, by the way, I afterwards had to

¹ Why is silver-gilt so especially pretty? They say you can't see through the gilding, and yet certainly there is a difference from gold. If it were *electron*—an alloy of the two metals—one could understand. (A prosaic fit suggests special colouring in the gold used.)

sell. On the other hand, I have not the slightest objection to horn spoons, and I like porridge very much, if it only would agree with me. During the rationing time I subsisted chiefly on fish and rice and potatoes, with an occasional tin of something. A member of my family, I believe, exploded on recognising, in the coat my portrait was taken in, one that she had known a dozen years ago. And there are few things I like better than communicating “half-yans” of whisky to deserving persons who might otherwise go without them; though naturally this can’t be done indiscriminately, because my whisky has to relieve Pussy-foots of their proper share of taxation. But how about that raised standard of living which some amiable publicists tell us we all wish achieved?

It is, I believe, admitted that *mere* cost of living cannot determine wages. That it cannot is at any rate one of those obvious truths the persistent ignoring of which may well make the Science of Political Economy feel Dismal herself, though, if they are not ignored, there is no need

for her to feel, to look, or to be so. Prices rise in consequence (1) of the cost of production, (2) of the relation of supply to demand. The most important item of the cost of production is wages; and by far the largest item of demand, except in the case of a few luxuries and oddments, is the demand of the wage-earners. Raise their wages, and both the factors of price increase in strength; and so you must raise again, and so on, and so on, to breaking-point. People talk of vicious circles—if there is a more vicious and a more quickly revolving circle than this I do not know it. The only way to lower prices is either to increase production or to diminish demand. And this latter is what the middle classes have been doing *en masse* for years, and the upper to a very considerable proportion and extent. But the lower say, “No! Why can’t I have my raised wages *and* my raised standard of living *and* much more also?”

Let us finish, as the subject is rather prickly, with a “Note of Reconciliation” after the

manner of Euripides and the late Mr. Matthew Arnold. I have been made, since I began to write this, to think more sympathetically of the poor fellow and his “Why can’t I have my pound-a-week?” by the conduct of a very nice young cat whom I have the honour of knowing. He evidently cannot understand why there should not be fish for breakfast *every* morning. And when he expostulates, not only

With woven paces and with waving *tail*

(it is a very bushy and beautiful tail), but with open mouth and a queer half-coaxing, half-reproachful combination of purr and mew, it is difficult not to hear him say, “*Why* can’t I have my fish for breakfast?” Only, you see, he can’t, because it is not there. And if doling goes on extensively and increasingly, as it is sure to do, unless stopped, the two-legged and tail-less creature’s pound-a-week will not be there either—or ever.

XLIV. "*Yellow-Boys*."—The recent use in France of the word *jaunet* for the new French aluminium token-coins—which, they say, partially replace dirty paper as representing the franc—must have set others besides myself a-meditating. The earliest substitution of the colour-name for the coin which is known to me is a line of that most agreeable, if by no means most proper, of poets whom the Bishop of Dunkeld called, with singular felicity, "the mixed and subtle Martial." The inception or occasion of the epigram¹ in which it occurs was, I regret to say, by no means proper; but the situation can be presented without any impropriety. Martial had enjoyed the company of a pretty (she is specially designated *formosa*) and obliging young person of the certainly pretty, if not uncommon, name of Phyllis. And he was meditating, before they separated, what nice present he should give her. Should it be a pound of something that looks like a cosmetic or perfume?²

¹ xii. 65.

² The original has proper names, as of the seller. We might say to-day, "Something of Coty's."

Or a weight¹ of the famous Baetic wool for a dress? Or, thirdly:

An de moneta Caesaris decem *flavos*,

that is to say, "ten *yellow-boys*" fresh from the mint? As a matter of fact, she interrupted him, put her arms round his neck, kissed him sweetly and long, and asked for an *amphora* of wine—which heightens my personal opinion of Phyllis considerably.² But that is not the question. The point is of course the limitation of the phrase "yellows" for yellow or gold *coins*. I do not remember any similar shortening in Greek,³ though this may be due to my lack of re-

¹ If the odd word *acre* with *pondus* is correct, it may mean "scarlet." *Acer* is used of a dazzling or blazing *red*. But one would expect something = "light." Spanish wool may have been like Shetland, and Phyllis would certainly have looked *formosa* in a mantilla. But "*pondus acre*" may mean "a *smart* weight."

² For it shows that, if her morals were weak, her taste was good, and that she was not mercenary—the one unpardonable thing in women, and the root of all evil even more in them than in men.

³ In fact the Greeks reversed the process, and called the yolk of an egg τὸ χρυσοῦν, while the enormous number of compounds with *chryso-* gives additional evidence.

freshers, in the shape of Greek books, at the moment.¹

For the same reason I cannot give particulars of the use of "yellow-boy" for guinea or sovereign in English (the Oxford Dictionary itself has not got to Y yet, has it?). But it was certainly popular in Early Victorian times. And French dictionaries of the most respectable character allow, with the same ticket of *populaire*, *jaunet* as designating a *gold* coin. Now it has come down to (tarnished) aluminium.

But I shall probably be told that, as a learned professor not long ago informed the *Times*, though we have been occupying the earth (for two hundred thousand, was it, or only twenty thousand years?), the fancy for "the soft, useless yellow metal" is quite recent, entirely unreasonable, and due chiefly to magical assumptions. Well, there are professors and professors. *I* know nothing

¹ The ever useful "L. and S.," however, confirms one in the belief that "golden" was the nearest Greek word to pure "yellow." *Χρῆδος*, with the less common *κρῆδος* and *ρῆδος*, seem to have had increasing doses of *red* in them, as *χλῆδος* certainly had of *green*.

and, to be perhaps impertinent, I don't believe any one else knows anything of what happened, or did not happen, two hundred thousand or twenty thousand years ago. I *do* know that this soft, yellow, [*far from*] useless metal has had not merely unusual commercial but unusual æsthetic value attached to it in all parts of the world which have had any of it, and brains enough to use it and leave records of themselves—for at least *some* thousands of years. Also I hold that there is in this the strongest of all possible arguments for continuation of the attitude. But that is a sort of “loop-line” of thought from the “three- or fourpenny-bit” franc of to-day, and the not unhandsome fee of ten *flavi* (a *flavus* was pretty clearly = an *aureus*, which was not much more than a shilling short of our loved and lost sovereign). And there are others, to be indicated by the following questions:

(1) Is an Aluminium age (let us remember the “feet of *clay*”) a further degradation from an Iron one, to which latter name ours may certainly lay some claim?

(2) Is the "magic," to which the Professor assigns the position of gold, anything more than its at once perceived resemblance to gold *hair*?

(3) Did Phyllis mean to ask, when she "*amphoram* rogavit," the full measure of that name, commonly put at about four of our gallons or two dozen of our common "bottles"? Or is *amphora* used here, as it often is elsewhere, for any jar, vase, bottle, or other receptacle of various sizes?

(4) Did Martial mean to sneer at her love of wine (in which case the full quantity would fit best), or merely to bring out the modesty of her demands in comparison with his intention? for ten *flavi* would probably buy half-a-dozen amphorae at least. The Romans, Mr. Feeder, were not much of gentlemen, but Martial's Spanish birth may have given him a touch of the *caballero*. I hope he gave her the wine, the wool, and the *flavi* as well. Somehow it seems to me that Roman perfumes were likely to be coarse, in which case she would be better without them.

(5) Lastly, wouldn't "The Rogation of the Amphora" make a rather pretty and quite proper picture, with the four alternatives figured in the four corners? "Chocolate box" some one says; but Chocolate-boxity is after all better than Cubism.

The piece also suggests something else—something with not the slightest offence—even of suggestion—to Mrs. Grundy in it. It is, as the single line quoted will show, in those curious *scazons* or *choli-* [not by any means *chori-*] *ambics*, "limping" or "stumbling" verses, with a spondee or trochee at the end, which Hipponax is supposed to have invented in Greek, and which Martial himself manages so well in Latin. Now has any one in the last twenty years—the numerous prosodic experiments in which I don't know quite so well as I do those of the previous two thousand and more—attempted this metre, or anything like it, in English? There is in *some* lines of Browning's "Dis Aliter Visum" an effect somewhat similar, for instance:

No feat which, done, would make *time break*

What cannot grow complete (*earth's feat*).

But most of the corresponding line-ends are pure iambs, and the real "break" or "stumble" is made, not by the long syllable in the penultimate place, but by the reflux of the rhyme. Also the last foot is never a trochee, as it may be in Greek and Latin. I suspect this is one of the classical measures to which our English is obstinately rebel.

Note, too, that the original is always a *senarius*, regular up to the break. Now the run of an English Alexandrine would seldom or never suit this. Drayton's and Browning's break *in the middle* has a much stronger *caesura* than the classical one, which is not in the middle: while Spenser's stanzas and Dryden's triplets and interspersed singletons, poles asunder as they are, would be equally spoilt by the end-stumble. Something very like the effect of the scazon can be easily attained in the decasyllable—Milton has

things, practically spondees, in the fifth foot.¹ But then it must be remembered that the *odd* feet admit substitution in all iambic measures. Fourteeners would, I think, be equally obliging in the seventh. The apparent stumble does occur in the *even* foot at the end of the Browning lines given above, and that is why I quoted them, though, as I said, they are exceptions in their place. And they have taken us a long way from the ten yellow-boys that suggested them, and the perfume, and the wool, and the wine, and Phyllis, and her mixed, subtle, "sadly immoral" (to quote the "Letter from Teignmouth"), but extremely pleasant and not seldom really poetical lover.

XLV. "*Great is Diana!*"—There are few subjects in Politics which have had more interest for me, all my life, than the quarrel of Free Trade

¹ "Jove's court," in the very first line of *Comus*, and the famous "Both stood" followed in the next line by "Both turned," whereby Dr. Johnson and Dr. Guest were both shocked. But I do not think, though some people do, that Milton ever tried at the end trochees, which are perhaps necessary to get the thorough "stumble" with us.

and Protection, though (as perhaps in some other matters) I have rather “met together in a house of my own by myself” in regard to it. I was born just when Peel was ratting, and no doubt acquired some disgust for Free Trade with that nativity. But I do not think this much affected my conclusions when I came, at Oxford, to study Political Economy seriously. I have always been a Protectionist; somebody said to me once, “You were a Protectionist when Chamberlain was a Republican.” But I have never been a fanatical Protectionist; and the fanaticism of Free Traders has been to me a matter of lifelong wonder—or would have been so if I had not attained, comparatively early, to something like an idea of what fanaticism is—a kind of *paranoia*, the conduct of whose victims can provoke pity, disgust, indignation sometimes, but hardly ever wonder.

One would imagine that the question was one answerable only by experiment, and capable of being so answered, not perhaps very rapidly, but pretty convincingly. You put a tax on or you

take it off. You note the effects as they manifest themselves, and remove or replace it as these effects suggest. Before, and during, and after this experiment those who were in favour of it will praise it, and those who are against it will run it down. That is human nature. But what occasion—what honest or sensible occasion, that is to say—is there for raging and screaming, as Free Traders do whenever Protection is suggested? When you find a tolerably hard-bitten Ex-Law officer weeping like the Walrus over the diminished currants in a baby's bun, or an Ex-Prime Minister who handfasted himself to Dora—nymph of Protection in its most virulent form—tumbling over the gangway of a liner to shout "Free Trade" as he first touched English soil, you are not surprised at either. It is a party and "place" opportunity. Sir John Simon pities the babies as Mr. Slumkey kissed them in Eatanswill long ago, and Mr. Lloyd George shouts "Free Trade" as he shouted "refreshing fruit" but yester-year. But why should any

sensible average voter be taken in by such tricks?¹

It is, I suppose, an admitted fact that, as usual, discreditable advantage was taken of the situation by the parties who had advantage to gain. But putting that aside, it had been obvious to me—the very title of this Scrap, chosen even before the disaster, will show *that*—as it should have been to all careful students of Politics, that *any* hoisting of the Protectionist flag, no matter with what charges, quarterings, stripes, stars, or what not of limitation, was putting a corresponding “cry” of immense value into the mouths of the enemy, and a *flagstaff* of dangerous quality in their hands. Not “Popery and Wooden Shoes,” not “Wilkes and Liberty,” not “Bulgarian Horrors,” not “Chinese Slavery” and “Methods of Barbarism” themselves, though they are all of the same family (*v. sup.*, No. XL.), have ever had what some-

¹ The two paragraphs above were written almost literally as they stand at the beginning of the disastrous contest which terminated on December 6, 1923. But what follows might almost have been written at the same time with them.

body in the general case of "cries" has called the "wicked charm" of "Protection and Dear Food." It is, indeed, most like "Popery and Wooden Shoes" in more ways than one, because of the entire want of proof of essential connection between the two bogeys. Even if I did not know many Roman Catholics who do not wear wooden shoes, and, as it happens, not one who does, I should not connect His Holiness (to whom I have no very serious objection if he would only keep to his own provinces) with *sabots*. But these politicians pretend to connect, and their unlucky dupes *do* connect, dear food with Protection, in spite alike of express disclaimers of any intention to raise the price of food; of positive evidence that wisely managed Protection does not do so; and of rational demonstration that, even if food prices rose, the rise might be, as it has been in the past, due to innumerable other causes.

But in such cases all such considerations are thrown to the winds, or, if you like an uglier and older metaphor, to the wave of Cocytus. "Great

is Diana of the Ephesians!" Free Trade, even by its own showing, *is* more like the ugly, many-breasted goddess of the East than like that Diana of Latmos, who surely must have got in some strange fashion mixed up with her sister Aphrodite—if only as the Aphrodite of Dreams, the most precious of all.

But "Diana of the Ephesians" *is* great, if in a peculiar and not enviable way. Get a cry of her on your side, and Sense, Reason, Evidence take wings and fly before you. You generally add a lie or two of special circumstance, but it is really unnecessary. It only shows natural disposition and taste, and, indeed, exposes you occasionally to disagreeable tripping up. It is best to trust to the mere "cry," the thing that has been told to the multitude nearer three thousand times than three, and so must have infinitely more truth in it than anything merely thrice enunciated. If arguments are wanted, use the old ones only because they partake of the sacred familiarity of the "cry" itself; remind the

audience that your opponents are the stupid party; and throw in as many repetitions of the greatness of Diana as is possible.

XLVI. *Crumbs*.—(1) The astonishing width of Scott's reading, and the felicity with which he used it are, or should be, well known. A good many years ago I pointed out, I think for the first time, that the Chevalier's striking reply¹ to General Campbell's (in the circumstances) chivalrous and admirable disclaimer of knowledge of him, "Our ancestors, sir, have been well acquainted," is genuine and historical, having been, according to "Zeluco" Moore's first-hand testimony, addressed in Italy by the Prince to the Duke of Hamilton. Quite recently, as I was reading *Rob Roy* for, I should think, about the fiftieth time, something struck me, for the first, in a phrase near the end, "That venerable person" [Mr. Justice Inglewood] "had been much dis-

¹ In that final scene of *Redgauntlet*, which is one of not the least great things in fiction.

turbed with thoughts of what he had been, and what he now was." The *sentiment*, of course, is primæval: it was probably that of Adam when he found himself outside the gate of Paradise, and did not even know that the Angel was slipping a latch-key of imperfect and temporary return into the pocket of Eve's fur-coat. But the phrasing reminded me, as never before, of the two great lines of Mathurin Regnier, almost best of French satirists, and very far from worst of French poets:

Le regret pensif et confus
D'avoir été et n'être plus.

It is of course not in the least necessary that Scott should have read Regnier, but it *is* at least possible that he had.

(2) I suppose there are people to whom the contrast, in such a hemistich as

Far in the spiritual city,
of the clang of "Far" with the whispers of "in the

spiritual city," following—of the solid halt of the monosyllable with the glide of the trisyllabic foot or feet, convey no sensation of pleasure, and therefore no afterglow of admiration. Let us to whom things are different, without Pharisaism but without shyness, thank God that it is so. I know that there are some on whom the chief, if not the sole, effect of such miracles, even if noticed, is to make them attempt to bring the miracles themselves under apparently scientific laws or theories, which as a fact destroy them. Once more, *Laus Deo* (in so far as it is permitted) that it is not so with us.

(3) The device of powdering the hair with gold, introduced or patronised by the late Empress Eugénie and recorded for posterity in verse by the late Mr. Browning, had its merits, especially for dark-haired ladies.¹ But it had a habit of recording itself, in another sense, on the shoulders

¹ It ought also to have looked extremely well on certain shades of *red* hair, but I was never fortunate enough to see the exact combination.

and lapels of black dress-coats—a habit which invited impertinent constructions.

(4) The Scrap above (No. V.) on “Byron” was, as noted, not merely written, but in print before the controversy as to commemorating him in the Abbey arose. As it happened, I could not well include *there* the chief reason for my approving the memorialists. It is taken from what is at once the *locus classicus* and the most authoritative direction on this matter—the great forty-fourth chapter of *Ecclesiasticus*.¹ Of the “famous men—our fathers that begat us” (including specially afterwards “such as recited verses in writing”), it is said that “the Lord hath wrought great glory by them through His great power.” Now, however much Byron may have misused his opportunities, and however questionably the glory and power wrought by him may contrast

¹ I hope some of my readers had, as I had, the luck of hearing this read by Mr. Cyril Maude at the Thackeray Commemoration Service in Charterhouse Chapel a dozen years ago. If so, they will hardly have forgotten the reading.

with those wrought by others, nobody, I think, can contest the existence of these good things, sometimes in an actually great degree. At least I do not. And I think that what the Lord wrought, and the person through whom He wrought it, may be commemorated in the Lord's House, leaving uncommemorated that which He wrought not.

(5) Perhaps some one may remind me that the *fummo* (v. *sup.* p. 32) was *in* the Accidious during life, and is not stated to have been round them in Hell. But their souls must have carried it with them, and the whole description implies darkness over, as well as in, the *onde bige* and the *belletta negra*.¹ It should perhaps have been added that the "worst cases" of Accidia seem to have included something like the Greek *θηριότης*, or bestial indifference to, if not actual violation of, law, reason, and decency.

¹ Is the likeness of these two phrases to the *nigras undas* of Lucretius merely fortuitous?

(6) If one only could teach Bishops, Deans, Lady-Preacheresses, and other persons of official or self-conferred distinction that there is a distinction of another kind between "not knowing" and "knowing not"!

(7) THE RULES OF RED 'RITHMETIC

Addition is for wages,

Subtraction is for work,

Multiplication is for taxation of upper and middle class incomes,

And Division is for their goods and their chattels and all that they possess.

(Particular attention is requested to the fact that the above is in a most elegantly constructed rhythm—not metre. The single middle rhyme of the third line is intentional in all ways, in its singleness as well as its position. The voice in recitation should begin slowly and rather solemnly, quickening at "Multiplication" and thenceforward rising and hurrying to a sort of joyous howl at "possess.")

XLVII. *Grasshoppers*.—I once shot a grasshopper, in the garden of a house close to St. John's Church, Notting Hill, some seventy years ago. It was the only game that I could ever have hung on the panels, or set stuffed or glazed on the mantel, of my ancestral halls—if I had had any. And this shot was even less intentionally successful than Mr. Tupman's at the plump partridge. But the circumstances were rather interesting. The cicala fell to the wadding of a not ignoble instrument, having "got in the way of it," as the defenders of the Manchester assassins said of the luckless policeman and the murderer's bullet. And it was no clumsy cast toy gun—much less catapult or anything of that kind—that impelled the cardboard. Does anybody remember a gun-maker named Blissett, whose shop was in the now destroyed buildings of Holborn? Besides the ordinary stock of his trade, he used to sell most beautiful miniature artillery—not cast, but turned out of genuine gun-metal in exact old naval patterns; carronades with proper breech-

screws to elevate or depress, on sliding platforms; elegant little mortars; smaller guns—I forget the proper name for them, is it swivels?—on stands like telescope stands, etc.¹ It was one of the last named that slew, but not murdered—for there was no “intention”—the insect whose Greek forbears slept and sang “amid the tamarisk’s hair.”

I should never have slain it intentionally, since it is in many ways a sacred animal. And I have always regarded the act as, albeit unintended, sinful and punishable—difficult, too, to atone for. Perhaps the punishment, if not the atonement, is taking place now, as indeed the Book of the Preacher suggests. Is there *any* greater book than *Ecclesiastes*? Some people may say, “Oh, this is your Thackeray-mania. *He* taught you

¹ My father used to give me these on successive birthdays. He also once brought me from the Paris Exhibition (of 1856, was it not?) a miniature *Pièce de Quatre*, the prettiest and completest toy-specimen of H.A. that I ever saw. It was too pretty to fire and (I strongly suspect) might not have stood that ordeal. But the Holborn battery consumed plenty of powder in *my* days, and I think my grandson has some of its constituents now.

to admire *Ecclesiastes*." As a matter of fact, chronological and other, it was *Ecclesiastes*, at least partly, that taught me to admire Thackeray. But that is a detail and a digression.

One has not, unless one is exceptionally *κουφόνους*, "light-minded," to wait to be old in order to know what the Preacher meant by putting "the grasshopper shall be a burden" in his magnificent and terrible description of old age itself. But the average grasshoppers of youth¹ are themselves light, at any rate passing, and middle age is generally too busy to pay much attention to its share of them. When one gets old they have rather a habit of growing to pterodactyl size, for the moment at least. The shops *won't* send the fish you ordered, or the medicine you want. Cigar ash *will* fall on a fluffy waist-

¹ In actual childhood they of course appear—or appear to appear—crushing; but children are awful frauds. Their almost invariable practice of never beginning to cry after a fall, till they have picked themselves up and found themselves quite undamaged, is characteristic. And please let any reader remember that I do not call really serious disasters, at any time of life, grasshoppers. They, or some of them, are burdens of a very different kind—and not momentary.

coat which has been presented to you by angels. Gratings in the street insist upon snapping off the india-rubber ferule on your stick, and it clatters offensively on the pavement. And in each case the grasshopper, slain a lifetime ago on the top of Notting Hill, avenges itself by being rather bigger and much heavier than an albatross, if not so persistent.

But grasshoppers are small things, and yet can thus be a burden. "Scraps" are also small things, and therefore, according to a kind of logic rather prevalent nowadays, can also be a burden. So let them cease.

THE END





